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[AFTER THE LESSON.]

FATE.

By the Author of "Nickleboy's Christmas-Box,"
"Maurice Durant," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXIX.

For what is wedlock forced—
An age of discord and continual strife.

Shakespeare.

How the remainder of the day was spent Lillian could not tell. She knew that there was a hushed hurrying to and fro and a continued passing up and down the grand staircase and along the corridor.

The old doctor was in the sick-room or pacing the corridor snuff-box in hand, the importance of the case being denoted by the frequency of the pinches with which he regaled himself.

Sir Ralph grew anxious, too anxious to allow of his asking Lillian any farther questions concerning Mr. Besant's proposal.

Miss Lucas, whose services in the sick-room had been offered but gratefully declined, moved from drawing-room to dining-room, corridor to conservatory in noiseless stealthiness, picking up in her colourless way what crumbs of information fell from the lips of the servants or Sir Ralph.

As for Lillian she sat on her low footstool beside the great arm-chair looking drearily and sadly before her, her sweet face supported by her hand and her lips tightly compressed. She had a great deal to think of, a morrow to look forward to.

To-morrow she must give her answer to be Mrs. Besant, mistress of the Towers, or not! It was a great question, and she found her consideration of it greatly impeded by the picture of the quiet tutor lying huddled up on the grass with his broken arm. How bravely he had sprung to her rescue. How he had thought light of his injuries, his courage and his agony. With what dignity he had extracted the promise that she would not mention him as her rescuer from a certain danger and a possible death!

She thought of all this and her heart felt those throbs which always accompany the first symptoms of the master passion.

This noble, courageous, dignified gentleman, what was he worthy of? Her heart, always truthful, replied, audibly enough—love! Did she love him? She silenced the question and rose to take her candle.

Sir Ralph entered the room at that moment.

"Going to rest, my dear Lillian?" he asked.

"Yes, papa," she said, kissing him and averting her face. "Any news of Mr. Clifford?"

"No good news, I am sorry to say," he replied. "The doctor does not despair of saving his arm, but he speaks doubtfully and looks grave. The poor fellow suffers fearfully, he says, but he bears it with heroic patience. He has not called out once though the cold perspiration starts in great beads from his brow."

Lillian groaned and her face drooped still lower.

Sir Ralph kissed her and she glided from the room.

To reach her own room she must pass Mr. Clifford's. It was but natural she should pause for a moment. As she did so she started, struck with astonishment at hearing her own name spoken.

Unwilling to listen yet filled with a burning eagerness to learn who had pronounced it she lingered, and as the door was slightly ajar heard Mr. Clifford's voice—alas! how altered—exclaim:

"The horse, the horse! the gate—she must pass the gate! Oh, Heaven, the gate! Lillian! Lillian!"

A sudden pallor swept over her face succeeded by as sudden a crimson.

He was delicious and speaking, thinking of her!

Why should the thought give her such pleasure, such exquisite delight? She could not tell, but, hoping and yet yearning to hear more, lingered there still.

At that moment the door opened and Mrs. Williams came out.

She started as she saw her mistress standing there candle in hand, and dropped a courtesy.

Lillian sprang forward.

"How is he?" she asked, eagerly.

"Very ill, miss, very ill indeed," said Mrs. Williams, with something like tears in her eyes. "Poor, dear gentleman, so kind and so just as he was to everybody. Oh, Miss Lillian, isn't it dreadful?"

Lillian nodded.

"He is delicious?" she said, keeping her face in the shadow.

"Yes, miss, and talks"—Mrs. Williams hesitated and looked curiously up into the face of her young mistress, which, however, was too much in the shadow to be read—"and talks wild like."

"Yes?" said Lillian.

"Of course, miss," said Mrs. Williams, "we, the doctor and me—no one else has been near him—takes no notice of that."

Lillian nodded, and, with a sigh, passed on to her own room.

She slept little that night, and her pillow, if carefully examined, might have shown some traces of tears.

The morning broke clear and beautiful, still it brought no joy to Lillian; to-day was to decide her fate—this day when the man who had saved her life lay in mortal agony with the injuries received in her behalf.

For the first time in her life she was unhappy, and, with the traces of tears on her face, passed through the French window of the breakfast-room into the rosary.

The beauty of the morning oppressed her, and she turned from the gay colours of the flowers with a gesture of distaste until it suddenly occurred to her that she might pluck a few for the sick-room.

With a slight flush upon her face she set about her task and with a feverish eagerness chose the sweetest smelling, arranging them into a posy with practised facility.

"There is something wanting yet," she murmured. "It is too tame and commonplace for such a mind; a blade or two of thick grass, where now shall I find it?"

And with a sigh she passed over the close-clipped lawn into the meadows.

There she found what she wanted, a few leaves of long grass, which she hoped would bring an air of freshness and relief to the man struggling with his pain, and with another sigh was hurrying towards

the house, when a gentleman sprang over the fence and lifting his hat came forward.

It was Claude Ainsley.

"Good morning, Miss Melville; the early bird plucks the best flowers in this case. I was staying at Neriton" (which was the next village), "and heard of the accident to your tutor. How is he this morning? But I suppose you don't know yet."

Lilian shook her head, which at his question had bent itself over the flowers.

"No, not yet," she said, quietly. "Last night he was in terrible pain, I believe."

"Broken his arm, I heard," said Mr. Ainsley, who after the sudden brightness produced by the unexpected meeting had relapsed into a dull, almost sad expression. "It is a painful accident, and wants a strong constitution to stand it cheerfully."

"Then I think Mr. Clifford must be strong," said Lilian, "for they say he never complains. He is delirious, I think."

Claude Ainsley nodded.

"Indeed, that is bad."

Lilian looked up with so unmistakable an alarm that he added, quickly but quietly:

"Not dangerous, but likely to retard his recovery. By the way, my informant could not tell me how it occurred. Do you know?"

Lilian hesitated, and Mr. Ainsley was almost certain that the face again bent over the flowers, crimsoned.

"Mr. Clifford says that he fell off the moor rock."

"Hum," said Mr. Ainsley. "Is he a young man?"

"Yes," said Lilian.

"And, pardon me, steady?"

"Yes," said Lilian, very decisively this time.

"I cannot understand how a man could tumble there," he said, thoughtfully. "Unless he overreached after a flower."

Lilian nodded.

"I am going into the house," she said, "and will inquire how he is. You would like to know?"

"Yes," he said, "I should; and they walked on side by side."

Presently Mr. Ainsley glanced at her face.

"It would be only polite to ask after your own health, Miss Melville," he said.

"Mine?" she said, trying to speak with exceeding gaiety, and looking at the more miserable.

"Oh, I am in excellent health, on form, as Mr. Dalton would say."

"I am glad to hear that," he said. "Pardon me again, but—you don't look well; pardon me still more, you do not look happy!"

She coloured, and still assuming excellent spirits, said:

"Come, I may retort, you do not always look happy;" and he winced, but after a second's silence said, with a deep and grave candour:

"Miss Melville, I am so much your friend, I am so much older that I may use the word without offence, that I am tempted to tell you the why and wherefore—had he done so, oh, how much would have been prevented!—but I dare not, yet let me open my heart to you so far as to speak on a delicate subject. I may tell you this much of the cause of my unhappiness, it sprang from the unfaithfulness of a woman."

Lilian had stopped while he was speaking, and with the utmost respect he took her hand and led her to a garden seat, seating himself at her side.

"You look somewhat puzzled," he continued. "You are wondering why I should talk thus to you. I scarcely know myself, but I am prompted to do so, and I will do it. Miss Melville, I may never see you again, I am disinterested perfectly in what I am going to say or rather advise you. May I speak without fear of giving you offence?"

"You may," she murmured, bending over the flowers and wondering with a beating heart if what he had to say concerned Mr. Besant or Mr. Clifford.

He inclined his head.

"In few words, although I have known you but a week or two, I feel a great interest in you. I may say that to you but I would shrink from saying it to any other woman in the world. Miss Melville, you are beautiful, young, accomplished. For a human being so endowed but one fate is in store—marriage."

Lilian shrank.

He went on slowly with that delicate intonation that robs a hard word of its harshness:

"That marriage when it shall come to you will be the key stone of your life. May I ask you to weigh it well on both sides in the scale before you enter on it? Miss Melville, my life was ruined by a wrong, a wicked marriage. A woman whom I loved well married a man she did not love nor ever loved. By doing it she wronged him, her husband, and another still more deeply—the latter was not myself."

His voice hardened there, but he went on without a pause: "She saw no sin, none of the unhappy results! She did what thousands of other girls do, married for money. You will not do that, but you may sacrifice yourself to a mistaken sense of duty, or still worse, a careless disregard of your own heart. I, a stranger, who cannot help the prompting of my heart to speak to you, implore you not to do so!"

Lilian's face sank still lower—she was trembling. Ah, if Mr. Besant could have been a witness to this interview what would have been his feelings?

Mr. Ainsley went on:

"Let me paint in plain, real colours some of the consequences that will follow such a step. Your husband may love you—think of the purgatory for his soul in the reflection that he bought your love. Worse still—oh, bitter, sacrifice—you yourself may learn to love at last—whom?—the wrong man. If your husband will suffer, how much more will you? Think, think. You may not know what love is, you can guess, but you cannot imagine what hopeless, never-to-be returned love is like!"

Lilian's hands were at her face, her whole frame shook.

"You may love already and be loved in return. If so I ask you to picture to yourself the misery you would entail upon the heart you love if you sold yourself to another. Oh, never, after the fatal step had been taken would such a soul as yours know peace—never, never! Chained to the man—you master—your buyer—you would fade, waste away and go to the grave, having killed not only your own but another's life, that life it should have been your fate to cherish and preserve. Hear me out, I implore. You may not love now, but after your marriage the passion may come. I stop. No need to tell you how fearful, how worse than deadly your position—obtained for me, lasting day by day with the love that had come to me in the guilty one!"

He rose, his face working with agitation.

Lilian remained for a moment, her face hidden, but suddenly she drew one hand away from her white cheek and held it out.

"You have saved me!" she breathed.

Mr. Ainsley sprang forward and grasped the cold hand.

"Thank Heaven!" he exclaimed, devoutly. "I have redeemed my wasted life by one good service."

He shook her hand and then, muttering "Good-bye," turned to leave her.

Lilian sprang up and caught his arm.

"But you—you—you are still brokenly," she said, "I do not give you hope, it is possible to show you the road to happiness? Oh, tell me that the cloud may pass away, and that I may think of you, my more than friend, as one not irretrievably hopeless!"

He smiled with grave sadness down to her bowed face.

"There is no hope for me," he said. "Let that assertion strengthen your resolution."

Before she could speak, if she could have aught to say, he had gone, and the beautiful girl, taking up the flowers, walked slowly towards the house.

At that moment Claude Ainsley seemed in her eyes a messenger from Heaven to save her from a life which he had shown her to be worse than death.

Ah! very far upon the road of life had Lilian Melville journeyed since yesterday!

If Sir Ralph noticed her constrained, absent manner he made no remark upon it. He watched her with jealous eyes, and in silence, for after hearing that Mr. Clifford was worse they never spoke. The fact was they were both waiting for Mr. Besant.

He came at eleven, noisy as usual, making the whole place echo with the clatter of his horse's hoofs on the stones of the courtyard.

Sir Ralph glanced anxiously at Lilian.

She glanced back in return and with an expression that puzzled him. It was almost one of entreaty for forgiveness.

"Well, Harry?" said Sir Ralph, shaking hands with him, and noting the confident smile upon his face as he glanced towards Lilian. "We have quite a sick house; have you heard?"

"Yes, something," said Mr. Besant. "Jolly awkward chap the tutor fellow must be! Wonder if he takes a glass too much—easily done when you are out for a spree as he was."

Lilian looked up and her eyes flashed.

Luckily Mr. Besant did not see them.

"No," said Sir Ralph, emphatically. "He certainly was not intoxicated, Harry, but I confess to being unable to comprehend it. Miss Lucas too cannot understand it," he added, bowing to that lady, who had entered as noiselessly as Mr. Besant had noisily.

"No," said Miss Lucas, lifting her gray eyes to Lilian's face after kissing her; "no, perfectly in-

applicable. Probably Mr. Clifford will make it clear when he recovers—if he should do so."

Lilian had suffered enough that morning to be able to hear this without showing her pain, so that the watchful Miss Lucas saw no sign that her random shot had taken effect.

"Well, I hope he'll get better," said Mr. Besant, impatient of the topic. "It makes everything so dull—eh? Great bore having anybody ill in the house."

No one echoing this unsympathetic opinion, Mr. Besant thought he would proceed to the business of his visit.

"Been in the garden, Miss Melville?" he said, turning to her for the first time, though he had kept his eyes sideways without a moment's release.

"Yes," said Lilian.

"Then it isn't any use asking you to come round now, I suppose?" he said.

"Yes," said Lilian, thinking it best to get her trial over. "Yes, I will go with you, I have nothing to keep me."

"Come along then!" he said; and they went, Sir Ralph looking after them with troubled face—Miss Lucas with cat-like eyes that followed them a great deal farther than Sir Ralph could.

Mr. Besant did not stand shivering on the brink. He took the leap, as he phrased it, without shilly-shallying.

"Well, Lilian," he said, almost stepping before her, and striking his leg with his riding-whip. "To-day has come, and so have I for your answer. I have not slept much, as you may guess, and I'm pretty anxious. 'Pon my word I didn't know I cared for you to the extent I do; I'm very hard hit indeed. Mother says she never saw any one so much loved, not even Alderman Ferrers," and he laughed scornfully.

"If he laughs at his own mother what respect would he show me?" thought Lilian, and this reflection gave her strength.

"You are not to be mistress of the Towers," she said, very pale, even to the lips.

He nodded anxiously.

"There it, Lilian, I don't do it well, I know, but that's what I mean. Be my wife!"

Lilian looked him full in the face.

"And I am plainly answer 'No'."

Mr. Besant never had such a face. He stared, opened his mouth, shut it again, and looked astounded.

"You—you—you are joking," he said.

Lilian shook her head.

"I know I should pain you—oh, how I wish you had not compelled me to. I cannot be your wife, Mr. Besant."

"Cannot!" he repeated, the angry flush growing deeper, "why not?"

"I will tell you," said Lilian, breathing hard. "It gives me more pain to say it than you to hear it. 'I do not love—care for you.'"

His face brightened.

"Oh!" he said, "I thought, it was something of that kind. Never mind, I like you all the better for being romantic, Lilian. Don't care for me. Well, many girls don't love their husbands, until they are married. I don't mind that, you'll get to love me; I'm not hard to get on with, my mother and I never had a hard word except over Alderman Ferrers, and it isn't likely you'll bore me as she does. Don't love me! Come, I thought you were going to say you hated me."

She shook her head.

"I like you, I respect you, Mr. Besant, but—but—I can never be your wife."

His hopeful face clouded again.

"I don't mind, I tell you," he said. "Oh, don't say no, don't be obdurate, you know it will break the old man's heart. Come, never mind not caring for me yet, be mistress of the Towers, Lilian!"

Our readers will pardon us the infliction of Claude Ainsley's sermon, as through it only could they see what influenced the beautiful heiress of Riverhall.

"Do not sacrifice yourself to a mistaken sense of duty," he had said, and she would not. Besides, there was something repulsive in this man's determination to have her at any cost, even of his self-respect.

Her face flushed more hotly than his own.

"No," she said, drawing herself up to her full height, "no, a thousand times no. If you would wrong yourself I will not wrong you. You know not what you ask of me, but I do know, and once for all I answer no!"

She turned, and—very quietly, beautifully majestic, so wondrously unlike the girlish Lilian of a few days since—would have gone without another word but he, white with passion, actually sprang in front of her to block her way, and, clenching his whip and his teeth at the same time, said, in a low, passionate voice, that grew more passionate with every word:

"So that's the answer, after dangling me at your back with a string of soft speeches and smiles—"

She was about to interrupt him indignantly but he would not let her.

"No, you've said enough for one, now let me speak. 'No's the answer after all, is it? and why? You don't care for me—the man you've known since a boy, and your father's choice—me, the owner of the next estate, the fittest and most proper match for you; and why, pray? oh, because you don't care for me! A school girl's namby-pamby romantic twaddle! But you're not a school girl! you're a woman, Lillian Melville. But there's something ahead. Don't care for me; no, because you care for some one else. Ah! you colour up at that. You know it. Your face tells it. Well, let him beware. I never threaten without following it up. I'll turn him out of cover yet, and I'll run him down without mercy. Fox-hunting has been my line; I'll have a try at a different game. Who is the lucky man, the man who has taught you to look me—whom you have known since a boy—in the face and tell me you don't care for me?"

Lillian, now that a pause in the torrid outpour had come, essayed to pass him, but he had not finished.

"You won't speak, you will do nothing but look haughty and proud, like your father. Well, I've a notion that you'll do something to let down his pride. But no," he added, in a white rage, "I think I'm on the scent and you shall not do it. Mark me, I'll stop it. I'll run him down, whoever he may be, and with that threat this specimen of an English gentleman strode off, passing so closely to the gray figure of Miss Lucas, hidden behind the border of shrubs, that his whip, still clenched in his hand, stirred the leaves that concealed her.

Lillian stole up to her own room, but she need not have feared Sir Ralph, for when, some hours after, having nerved herself for the task, she entered his own room to give her explanation he merely said:

"Well, my darling, he has gone?"

"Yes, papa," she said, kneeling beside him and holding her lovely face against his heart.

"And what has he taken with him, a 'Yes' or a 'No'?" asked Sir Ralph, tremblingly.

"A 'No,'" she replied, firmly.

He looked astonished for a moment, then troubled, lastly, with a sigh of relief which was like balm to her heart, he took her head in his hands and kissed it.

That night Miss Lucas wrote two letters, one was to Doctor Ambrose, the other to Lady Melville, and in the last she did not forget to state that Mr. Besant had been refused by Lillian Melville, and that Claude Ainsley had seen her early on the same morning.

Miss Lucas did not explain in so many words that it was in consequence of Mr. Ainsley's visit that Mr. Besant was refused, but she left her ladyship to draw her own conclusions, thinking with a smile what pain those same conclusions would bring to the woman who drew them.

CHAPTER XXX.

Then fly betimes, for only they
Conquer Love that run away. Carew.

How sweet a peace after a storm would be if it were not so deceptive. Sometimes, notwithstanding human wisdom, one forgets that other storms may and assuredly will arise and break on the serenity of the present.

It was peace at Rivershall. Mr. Clifford was better. He had had a trying time, a weakening, wearying time, and, added the old doctor, who, of course, wished to gain credit for a great cure, "a dangerous time."

"A weaker and older man would have fallen through under it," he told Sir Ralph. "For there was something more than the broken arm, something nearer the heart—ahem! A great shock, a great shock, no doubt, disturbed the proper level of the inner muscles—ahem!"

Mrs. Williams had nursed him throughout with something akin to the love and devotion of a mother.

No one, not even Miss Lucas, who had tried hard to gain a footing in the sick-room, had been admitted. None beside the doctor and the faithful nurse had heard the delirious man's ravings, and they were not the sort of persons to reveal them.

Mr. Clifford was coming down to-morrow. It was a happy thought for Lillian, a strangely happy one, notwithstanding that she had a right to feel happy at the recovery of the man who had dared and suffered so much for her.

She was just under that phase when one's own heart is a great and unanswerable puzzle.

He had been up but confined to his own rooms for some days past; to-morrow he was to journey down to the drawing-room, and to-day seemed longer passing to the beautiful pupil.

To-morrow came and with it the convalescent.

They were seated, Sir Ralph and Lillian, before the fire in the drawing-room—it was cold enough for a fire now, and the grand room looked all the cozier for it—when a quiet tap at the door announced his arrival.

Sir Ralph rose and opened it himself, and Mr. Clifford entered.

Sir Ralph was too much a man of the world to

start, but he might have been pardoned for so doing. Undoubtedly Mr. Clifford had suffered or the human face tells falsehoods.

He was changed, fearfully changed; thin and worn, pale and haggard, he wore in addition a wistful, troubled look, that did not entirely vanish even with the smile of respectful gratitude with which he shook the hand held out to him.

"I owe you a great debt, sir," he commenced, in his old, grave tone, but slightly weaker, but Sir Ralph stopped him.

"Not a word, I beg, Mr. Clifford, or you will mar the pleasure I feel in seeing you down again. Come to the fire, there is an easy-chair."

He approached the firelight and Lillian saw him. She started and trembled so much that Mr. Clifford felt the tiny hand fluttering like an imprisoned bird within his own.

"I—I am so glad to see you recovered," she said, in a very low voice.

"Thank you, Miss Melville; I am very grateful for your kind wishes," he said, and his tone was the same every whit as that he used while speaking to her before the accident.

She knew within the bottom of her heart that he would not take the slightest advantage, even in the modulation of his voice, of the service he had done her.

"You must be tired of your rooms and Rivershall," said Sir Ralph, after a little conversation on general matters, in which Lillian took the listener's part, stealing glances every now and then at the tutor's wan face.

"No," said Mr. Clifford, "indeed I am not. It would take more than an ordinary life to grow tired of Rivershall. I am longing to get out amongst the trees shorn now of their beauty."

"Ah," said Sir Ralph, "a row on the river would be nice for you. Jack Drutt shall take you when you are strong enough, which I fear will be some time yet."

"No, I am strong now, and quite recovered," said Mr. Clifford.

Sir Ralph shook his head with stately good-nature. "Not quite, I think," he said. "I was about to propose, Mr. Clifford, that you should try a little sea air, say Brighton, for a week or two; it would do you good."

Mr. Clifford looked at the fire.

"I am getting on rapidly," he said. "I think I would prefer to remain at Rivershall, thanking you, sir, for your kind offer, no less. I am anxious to resume my duties."

"Oh, not yet, surely not yet," said Sir Ralph. "Not yet. Take a little time."

"If I may say so much I would say that I should feel happier and more content to resume to-morrow," said Mr. Clifford.

Lillian shook her head, but, happening to glance at the wan face, said, rather inconsistently:

"I shall be glad if you are well enough."

Mr. Clifford bowed and the matter was settled, Sir Ralph never refusing anything his idol proposed.

Here Miss Lucas entered, and after a few words of congratulation to the invalid, stole off to her corner in the shadow where she immediately commenced the embroidery.

The evening passed in quiet conversation, which touched upon all things save the cause of Mr. Clifford's broken arm, which Sir Ralph reserved for a future occasion.

As the clock struck ten Mr. Clifford rose.

"Mrs. Williams is arbitrary," he said, with a smile. "I promised to return, like a good boy, at ten o'clock, and I must keep my word."

Sir Ralph shook hands, and Mr. Clifford as he made his formal bow to Lillian said, quietly:

"At ten to-morrow as usual, Miss Melville?"

Lillian nodded.

"Yes, if you are well enough, Mr. Clifford," and he retired.

At ten, as he had said, Mr. Clifford was waiting in the library to resume his duties.

Lillian was there at the first stroke of the clock.

She did not keep him a minute waiting that morning, and she got her books, paper, and ink herself, saying quietly but with a wonderful touch of gentleness in her voice:

"Do not trouble, please; I can carry them better than you with that arm."

He bowed and they set to work. If she were all caprice and impudence once she was all docility and meekness now.

She listened to his instructions with downcast eyes and eager ears, she followed every word with the greatest anxiety, and throughout the lesson displayed such a womanly sympathy for his physical weakness that none could tell how much he suffered from the desire to fall at her feet and kiss the graceful folds of her dress in his gratitude and over-brimming love.

"And that is the end of the lesson, is it?" she said. "And I am sure you are tired to death," and she looked into his face that wore a new wistful, troubled look.

"No," he said, "not at all, you have borne with me so kindly. Shall we go to the piano now, or will you practise later?"

"Now," she said, "after I have consulted Mrs. Williams."

He was about to request her not to ring, but with a quiet air of supremacy she rang the bell and asked for Mrs. Williams.

Mrs. Williams appeared with a tray of wine and jelly.

Mr. Clifford looked, if anything, annoyed.

"I—"

"Miss Lillian's orders, sir," said Mrs. Williams, timidly. "She said I was to bring it when she rang."

He took the wine and drank a glass and ate a spoonful of the jelly.

"You will not let me forget my weakness, Miss Melville," he said; "I assure you it is past."

Lillian said nothing but walked from the room, and he followed her.

She chose the piece and she played it, looking round at its finish to ask for his criticism.

He pointed out one or two phrases, adding:

"I cannot play them unfortunately."

It was his first and thoughtless allusion to his accident, and Lillian, flushing deeply, seized the opportunity for which she had been longing.

"Mr. Clifford," she said, in a low, agitated voice, "I cannot let you think me ungrateful any longer. I have endured a mountain of shame these last few weeks in the reflection that you have suffered so much, ah, so very much for me, and that I should take such a noble martyrdom without acknowledging it and proclaiming my gratitude."

He tried to interrupt her broken sentence, but she persisted, getting from red to pale and clasping her hands in her distress.

He looked at her sweet face, so beautiful in its agitation, for a moment in silence, then, averting his eyes that might have shown too much if they had met hers, he said, speaking by a great effort, coldly and calmly:

"Miss Melville, it has been the one thought that has troubled me while lying upstairs that you should overvalue the slight service I did you. If you think for a moment you will see that any one would have done the same, any man high or low would have stopped that horse. That it was I who happened to be near the spot at the time was an accident—an accident pure and simple. You owe me no gratitude; I did my duty—and—and—he paused, for he was torturing himself in making the assertion—"and I should have done it for any one else as readily."

Lillian flushed at the hidden meaning she fancied she detected in the last sentence, and shook her head.

"You cannot explain away your noble conduct by any such sophistry," she said, tremulously. "I cannot endure the burden of silence any longer. I must tell papa."

He bowed.

"I have no right to lay a seal upon your lips," he said, "but"—and here his voice grew so low that she could scarcely hear him—"but the morning Sir Ralph or any other person hears the story I must resign my post at Rivershall."

"Why? why?" asked Lillian, trembling.

"Why?" he repeated, fixing his dark eyes upon her. "Why? I cannot tell you. If you cannot conjecture I cannot, I say I dare not tell you."

He rose as he spoke and hurried away from the piano.

Lillian with her face down did not look his way till she saw him sink into the chair, and then looking up she was alarmed at the fearful pallor of his face.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, almost as pale, and sprang towards the bell.

But he stopped her by lifting up his hand.

"Do not ring, I pray; it is only a passing weakness, and will be gone in a moment."

She obeyed, she could not do less, and as he covered his face with his thin, emaciated hand she stole quietly back and commenced playing a sweet, delicious sonata of Mozart's.

He listened, and his hand dropped from his face, showing the latter calm and grave again.

"Will you sing?" he said.

She took her songs and chose a soft, mournful one, infusing into the words an intensity of imploring expression that brought his hand to his face again.

"You sang that perfectly," he said, "I can suggest no alteration that would be an improvement."

He rose. Still seated, she turned to him.

"You are not strong enough yet," she said, gently, raising her eyes, full of compassion, to his wan face.

He met the glance in all its intensity, and was nearly overcome.

"I am strong enough," he said, with almost a groan; "but—but you make me weak!"

The words seemed wrung from him, and without waiting for her to pass him he walked quickly from the room, leaving the beautiful girl with a flushed face and a heart beating wildly with a tumultuous passion that frightened her.

Mr. Clifford did not appear again that day, and for the rest of the week Miss Lucas's presence prevented any further introduction of the painful topic by his pupil.

But on the following Monday Jack Drutt appeared at the Hall, and with a dogged air of independence, which was always assumed when under the roof-tree of Rivershall, announced that the boat was ready for Mr. Clifford and that he, Jack, was waiting.

Mr. Clifford came down, and after thanking old Jack for the inquiries he had made during his illness accompanied him to the boat. At the bank stood Lillian.

"What a beautiful morning for your trip," she said, with the slight flush that always beautified her face when meeting him. "I almost envy you the row; the river looks so smooth and beautiful."

"Why don't you come too?" grunted old Jack; "there'll be two of you from the books then."

Lillian laughed, and the flush grew into a dark red. Old Jack got into the boat and set his sculls.

"Better come, Miss Lillian. You'll be sorry you didn't. Old Jack hadn't to beg and pray like this one time."

"Well, well," she said, as if yielding to the old favourite's grumbling, "don't get out of temper, Jack, and I'll come."

Mr. Clifford gave her his hand. She thanked him demurely, and sat down.

Mr. Clifford, with his usual calm respect, was going to seat himself in the middle of the boat, but old Jack prevented him.

"Plenty o' room on this seat," he growled. "Sit down."

"You mustn't make old Jack disagreeable," interfered Lillian, maliciously, and Mr. Clifford perforce seated himself at her side. The seat was only large enough for two.

"Shall I steer, or you?" said Lillian.

"I," he said.

She passed him the steering lines, and their hands touched. What caused the thrill that ran through them both at the contact?

Alas, they were now learning, slowly and surely, and that morning the lesson was finely advanced with.

It was beautiful, as Lillian had said—too beautiful to talk—and they both leant back, gazing in the water and listening to the plish-plash of the oars as they rose and fell regularly and musically, as if they would have been content to listen all their lives.

Suddenly Lillian broke the silence.

"Will you sing something?" she asked, in a low voice.

He made no reply, but after a moment's hesitation sang the song he had sung on the first night he had been asked to sing at Rivershall.

How sweetly it sounded on the light, placid water—how sweetly, with the singer so near that her hand if outstretched would be on his. As she thought it she was filled with an ungovernable longing to touch him, and, yielding to the desire, she, almost unconsciously, let her tiny fingers steal near and touch, with a feather's lightness, his thin, long ones.

The song fluttered and died out, and his hand closed on hers, while his eyes were bent on her pale face with a burning gaze.

For a moment his passion had full sway, and Lillian could feel the hot blood set his hand on fire, and almost hear the beating of his heart; but he speedily conquered it, and, in a voice that was low and choking, said, pointing to the bank:

"Row to the shore," and covered his face with his hands.

Directly the boat's bow had touched the bank he sprang out and hurried away in the direction of the wood.

Lillian, trembling with fear and a thousand conflicting emotions, burst into tears, and old Jack, astounded at this conclusion to the trip, stood staring with open mouth.

"Why, what's the matter, missie?" he growled, indignantly. "What call have you to cry? ain't you took enough care of? And what's Maester Clifford rush off like a wild dog for? Its my 'pinion your both mad as March hares. It's all o' book larnin'. I said as how it ud be. Heaven, forgive Sir Ralph for lettin' you carry on, say I."

Lillian, after setting the man's fears as to her sanity at rest, landed, and walked, slowly and sadly, home, with a presentiment that the day so happily begun would close with something sad and

bitter. Alas, the cloud had already obscured it, and she wept again as she thought of his sharp, harsh cry, and the hard, broken one "Row to the shore." Where would it all end, and whither was she drifting?

She entered the Hall by the side way, and hoped to steal to her room unperceived, but as she passed the dining-room door it opened suddenly and Sir Ralph came out.

She sprang towards him, but stopped suddenly, terrified and aghast at the fearful look upon his face. She had never seen it there before, and the remembrance of it remained with her to her dying day.

It was not rage, contempt, or despairing sorrow, but a commingling of the three with a preponderance of the former.

"Is it you, Lillian?" he said, regarding her with a stern and heavy frown. "I thought it might be Mr. Clifford."

He pronounced the tutor's name with an emphatic hatred that drove the blood from her heart, as if she had been stabbed with a knife.

"Oh, papa, tell me, what has happened?" she cried, throwing her arms round his neck, and searching his dark face with her love-keen eyes.

"Nothing I can tell you, Lillian," he said, in a wild, set voice. "Go to your room, and don't leave it until I give you permission."

"But, papa, papa! Tell me! Oh, you will break my heart! Tell me!"

"I cannot, I will not! I will not insult you, my darling!" he cried, wildly, unfastening her arms from about his neck and pointing to the stairs. "Go to your room, and do not leave it, I command you."

Lillian, petrified with grief and horror at the harsh tone and harsher look, bowed her head meekly and paced slowly up the stairs. Before she had got out of hearing she heard a man's voice in the room Sir Ralph had entered.

It was Mr. Besant's.

She uttered a low cry, and clung to the balustrade for support.

"Oh, what is it? what is it?" she breathed. "What has he done?"

Miss Lucas stole out upon her, and without a word took her to her room.

"Kate, tell me!" she cried, wildly. "What has happened?"

But Miss Lucas, immovable as usual, could only tell her that an hour since Mr. Besant had been announced, that he had been closeted in the dining-room with Sir Ralph, and that their voices had been raised as if in some dispute or altercation. Once too there had come a short, sharp cry from Sir Ralph as if he had heard some bad news, but nothing followed and no one had been summoned to the room.

All this Miss Lucas told, keeping her gray eyes fixed cunningly upon the pale face and winding up with:

"But I beg you will be calm. Restrain yourself, my dear Lillian; self-control is a virtue on such occasions is this. Sir Ralph will be displeased if he find your eyes red and swollen. Pray be calm."

Lillian answered by rising and pacing the room like a tigress robbed of its young.

"Calm!" she cried, with a mighty scorn. "Calm! Silence, Kate, if you have no better word than that for me!"

And before the all-conquering emotion of the true young soul the false one of the spy quailed and shrank. The hall door was opened, Lillian sprang to hers, and, opening it, listened intently.

She heard her father open the dining-room door and his voice say, sternly:

"If that is Mr. Clifford show him this way."

Then unable to endure the strain longer fell in a heap upon the floor.

(To be continued.)

DR. LIVINGSTONE.—The surmise that the white man reported as being held a prisoner by one of the tribes on the Upper Congo would turn out to be Dr. Livingstone is confirmed by a letter from a resident at Borna, in the interior of Lower Guinea, which has been forwarded to Dr. Beke. The letter states that the place where the doctor is detained is only twenty days' journey from Borna, but that he is entirely without means of ransom. Considering his long experience in dealing with African tribes, the intrepid traveller's friends will be sanguine that he will escape from his present peril without harm from his captors, and will soon be heard of in civilized territory. The letter mentions that the Relief Expedition that started from the West Coast under Lieutenant Granby is unable to proceed beyond St. Salvador.

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH'S MARRIAGE.—The Duke of Edinburgh and the Princess Mary will be married according to the ceremony of the Anglican Church, but prior to that will be married according to the ceremony of the Greek Church. It may be in-

teresting to know the forms thereof. The ceremony, which is accompanied with rites of a very imposing and elaborate character, is introduced by a selection of appropriate prayers, after which the rings are blessed by the archimandrite. To this succeeds the ceremony of crowning two crowns which have been previously blessed—one being placed on the head of the bridegroom, and the other appropriated in a similar manner to the bride. Each then takes in hand a glass of common wine, during which certain prayers are repeated, and a sponsor or witness to the union then comes forward. The rings and the crowns worn by the bride and bridegroom are then interchanged, after which hymns are sung by an officiating priest. Three circles are then made by the bride and bridegroom, who carry lighted candles; the archimandrite bearing the censer. Another prayer is then offered up, commending the parties to the Almighty, and imploring a blessing upon the union, signifying, in accordance with the rites of the Greek Church, the union of Christ with His Church; and after the archimandrites have conferred absolution the ceremony is brought to a conclusion.

THE EFFECTS OF WORRY.—That the effects of worry are more to be dreaded than those of simple hard work is evident from noting the classes of persons who suffer most from the effects of mental overstrain. The case book of the physician shows that it is the speculator, the betting man, the railway manager, the great merchant, the superintendent of large manufacturing or commercial works, who most frequently exhibits the symptoms of cerebral exhaustion. Mental cares accompanied with suppressed emotion, occupations liable to great vicissitudes of fortune, and those which involve the bearing on the mind of a multiplicity of intricate details eventually break down the lives of the strongest. In estimating what may be called the staying powers of different minds under hard work it is always necessary to take early training into account. A young man, cast suddenly into a position involving great care and responsibility, will break down in circumstances in which, had he been gradually habituated to the position, he would have performed its duties without difficulty. It is probably for this reason that the professional classes generally suffer less from the effects of overstrain than others. They have a long course of preliminary training, and their work comes on them by degrees; therefore when it does come in excessive quantity it finds them prepared for it. Those, on the other hand, who suddenly vault into a position requiring severe mental toil generally die before their time.

A DISEASE-DESTROYING TREE.—M. Gimbert, who has long been engaged in collecting evidence concerning the Australian tree "Eucalyptus globulus," the growth of which is surprisingly rapid, attaining besides gigantic dimensions, has addressed an interesting communication to the Academy of Sciences. This plant, it now appears, possesses an extraordinary power of destroying miasmatic influence in fever-stricken districts. It has the singular property of absorbing ten times its weight of water from the soil, and of emitting antiseptic camphorous effluvia. When sown in marshy ground it will dry it up in a very short time. The English were the first to try it at the Cape, and within two or three years they completely changed the climatic condition of the unhealthy parts of the colony. A few years later its plantation was undertaken on a large scale in various parts of Algeria. At Ardock, twenty miles from Algiers, a farm situated on the banks of the Hamyze was noted for its extremely pestilential air. In the spring of 1867 about 13,000 of the eucalyptus were planted there. In July of the same year—the time when the fever season used to set in—not a single case occurred; yet the trees were not more than nine feet high. Since then complete immunity from fever has been maintained. In the neighbourhood of Constantine the farm of Ben Machydlin was equally in bad repute. It was covered with marshes both in winter and summer. In five years the whole ground was dried up by 14,000 of these trees, and farmers and children enjoy excellent health. At the factory of the Gue de Constantine in three years a plantation of eucalyptus has transformed twelve acres of marshy soil into a magnificent park, whence fever has completely disappeared. In the island of Cuba this and all other paludal diseases are fast disappearing from all the unhealthy districts where this tree has been introduced. A station-house at one of the ends of a railway viaduct in the department of the Yau was so pestilential that the officials could not be kept there longer than a year. Forty of these trees were planted, and it is now as healthy as any other place on the line. We have no information as to whether this beneficent tree will grow in other than hot climates. We hope that experiments will be made to determine this point. It would be a good thing to introduce it on the West coast of Africa.



[THE FACE IN THE THICKET.]

THE FORESTER'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER VII.

Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
Deny us for our good.

Shakespeare.

DONNA CASTELLETTA had sunk upon her knees, her face covered with her hands and bowed to the ground, not three paces from where the path on the right of the fountain opened upon the green.

She had assumed this prostrate attitude partly from feebleness, partly to shut out from her vision the sight of the tragedy she believed was about to be. She knew well the iron will, the high and stern character of her husband. Each instant she expected to hear, if not the death shriek of her child, a cry of horror from the lips of the beholders. She had not stirred from the posture of despair which she had taken. She remained with her face to the ground while the followers of the prince had rushed by her to disarm the count.

At that instant she believed Cosmo had slain Vittoria, and that the rush of feet and clash of arms and sound of angry voices were from the rage and horror of those who had witnessed the deed.

She dared not raise her head; she could only gasp:

"My husband has slain my daughter! Now these men are slaying my husband!"

The foliage of the thicket behind her was dense, and drooping even to the edge of the lawn. For a moment the hand of a man who was hidden in that thicket, a man who had been there an hour before the count and his followers appeared—thrust aside the foliage and permitted his face to be visible to any one standing at the fountain and gazing toward him.

The moment it thrust aside the foliage Vittoria, gazing toward her mother, saw this hand—her glance being attracted toward it by the sparkle of a diamond ring worn on one of its fingers. The next instant she saw and recognised its face, and whispered to her father.

Cosmo, apprehensive of some cunning plot between the Caraccioli, wished to keep his eyes vigilant upon their every movement, lest they or some of their followers might spring upon him and disarm him ere he could slay his child. Yet the desire to permit his child to live, if possible, was strong in his soul. He would not strike the fatal blow while a hope remained. But the words and singular agitation of his daughter drew his eyes despite his vigilance for an instant to the spot of which she spoke.

That glance sufficed for recognition of the face in the foliage.

It was the face of his only son, his disowned son, the man known in Naples and in Sicily as Rizzio di Sicardo—Sicardo the Brigand!—a dark and noble face and full bearded, with naught in its expression that spoke of a brigand's ferocity or lawlessness of character, though every feature told of a bold, daring and resolute heart—a complexion tanned almost to the swarthiness of a Moor's—eyes black, brilliant and powerful—a broad, high, intelligent forehead, crowned with hair as black and fine and glossy as that of Vittoria, in massive short curls—the full, red, resolute, haughty under lip unhidden by the glossy black, twisted moustache, betokening both high pride and passionate heart.

And this was all that the clustering foliage, half thrust aside by one large and sinewy hand, permitted to be seen; and scarcely had Cosmo's glance flashed over it, his eyes and the gleaming eyes of the face meeting for an instant, when the hand and face vanished.

Rizzio di Sicardo had been lying and crouching in his leafy covert since the hour before day dawn. When Borrelli hid himself at the command of the count he had passed within three paces of Sicardo. When Lord Alfrasco was stretched in feigned slumber just before the coming of Vittoria he little dreamed that the dagger of the man who had threatened to cut off his ears and nail them to the great banner-staff in the Largo del Mercato was so near him.

Vittoria, the prince, and Donna Castelletta had each in turn passed within a few paces of Sicardo's covert.

The son of Cosmo was a man who bided his time. Had the count succeeded in carrying off the maiden the lawless noble would never have gotten away with his prey to his gay castle at Zapponezzo.

At the very moment the javelin of the prince was shearing through the ear of Manfredi the brigand was about to burst from his covert like a crouching lion, scornful of thrice the force of the count.

After events caused Rizzio di Sicardo to remain as motionless as the dead leaves under his knees. But the confusion of the brief tumult around the fountain caused him, in his eagerness to see what was being done, to expose his face, though but for a single moment.

"Rash boy! He is lost if they see him!" thought Cosmo, shuddering, and again fixing his gaze upon the nobles.

Cosmo called his son a "boy," though the brigand was fully thirty years old.

"It will be the destruction of a whole family if these nobles mean violence to my daughter!"

thought Cosmo. "For then will I stab my child, be slain in fighting these villains; my wife will die—and my son will not idly look on to see his father slain, but die trying to avenge him! Ay, it will end in the destruction of father, mother, son and daughter! Accursed Caraccioli!"

"Cosmo," here said the prince, "Lord Alfrasco has pledged me his oath never again to molest thy daughter, nor the peace of thy household—never again to set foot on the soil of Del Parsco without my consent—to return with me forthwith to Naples."

"I trust he will keep his oath, my lord," replied Cosmo, sternly. "Of this he may be sure—it will be well for him and his ruffians never to permit me to see any of them near my cottage or any ground, by vested right my own—and, my lord, though whoever may be Count Del Parsco hath the usual rights of sovereignty over all who dwell on the soil of the province, the land on which stands my cottage and for miles around, including the spot where we now are, is mine by right of purchase from the crown. So I warn Alfrasco of Zapponezzo and his bravoes never to prowl again upon the soil known in all Del Parsco as the Forester Range."

"Thou hast the landowner's right to defend thy own, Cosmo," said the prince, gravely, "and therefore I say naught of the wounds which thou hast inflicted upon the person of the count and his henchman Manfredi. Manfredi acted under the orders of his lord. I would my brother were less fond of deeds which require such unscrupulous service."

"Oh, rare justice!" said Cosmo, sternly, and with a sneer on his lips scarcely hid by his white beard. "In attempting to rescue my child from the grasp of a villain I have slightly wounded two villains, and I am pardoned for the deed. Good! Ha! ha! my pardon by the mouth of thy grace is to be the punishment of thy brother! Rare justice! Justice of the Caraccioli! Justice begot from an oath sworn upon the dagger-hilt of Lord Colonna!"

The powerful frame of the stately old man quivered with suppressed wrath and scarcely concealed scorn, and Lord Alfrasco smiled darkly, thinking:

"A little more of this and if Colonna be not indeed a cur he will bid us hang the scurrilous old knave to the nearest tree."

The fair face of the prince did indeed flash dark red as he listened to the stinging words of the audacious old forester, and a frown so dark gathered on his brow that Vittoria again trembled for her father's safety.

Yet the eyes of the prince were cast down with a sense of shame such as few, if any, of his name

had ever felt; and the frown on his brow was not of anger.

"Thou art far more bold than prudent, old man," he said, at length, raising his clear, blue and splendid eyes to the face of the wrathful forester. "And yet there is much truth in thy covert accusation. A thousand ducats shall Alfrasco of Zaponnetto pay to thee within a month, the same to be set aside as a marriage portion for thy fair daughter."

On hearing this Lord Alfrasco scowled, and ground his right heel into the soil as a silent vent for the rage he dared not then display.

"And if he pay it not within that time," continued the prince, "I will pay it for him—"

"Not to me, nor to mine," interrupted Cosmo, proudly. "Had his attempt to injure my child succeeded not all the gold of ten worlds like this could have made less the injury. As he hath failed my child needs no marriage portion greater than she hath, my lord."

"Thou art still very angry, old man, and justly. It will be but waste of words to speak more with thee now," replied the prince, gently. "We will leave thee and thine—"

"Thanks, my lord; 'tis all I ask."

"Retain thy office as Chief Forester of Del Parso, and at such times as I shall not be on the soil of Del Parso be thou temporary Count Del Parso. Thou knowest now, Lord Alfrasco," added the prince, turning to the count, "that this old man is empowered to protect his child, and that thou hast little mercy to expect from him if thou faltest into his hands and I not near to interpose my superior authority."

"Did I not pledge my word, prince," said the count, "not again to set foot in Del Parso?"

"This old man will put no faith in thy promise, count, and I would have him feel that he has the power henceforth to punish any one that may attempt to injure his daughter."

"Nay, I accept no office from a Caraccioli," said the old man, proudly. "That which has been mine these ten years came from the hand of Queen Joanna; and, since her majesty hath seen fit to create a perpetual Count Del Parso, Cosmo di Siccardoli is henceforth Cosmo, the landlord of 'The Forester Range.'"

"Old man," replied the prince, gravely, "thou art rash. I mean thee well."

"Thanks, my lord, but Cosmo di Siccardoli can accept no office from a Caraccioli."

"Yet thy late authority bears the name of Gianni Caraccioli."

"The name of the queen is above that of the grand constable. It was not from Gianni Caraccioli that I received that parchment. This is my wife, my lord, and we ask no favours from the Caraccioli."

Donna Castelletta at this moment approached and stood near her husband, with her arms around Vittoria, her noble face pale and sad.

"Behold them, Castelletta," whispered Cosmo to his wife. "These two are the sons of Gianni Caraccioli—our foe!"

Donna Castelletta cast a keen glance at the noble face of the prince, and then a second at the handsome but sinister countenance of the count.

"The black-eyed one was Gia Petti," thought she.

"Had I seen him before I could have said as I say now—this is the son of the serpent."

"We can ask no favour of a Caraccioli, my lord," continued Cosmo; "and, since Del Parso's count is now a Caraccioli, Del Parso shall ere long know us no more. For the justice thy grace hath just vouchsafed we are very grateful. Thou hast spared my life for the crime of defending the honour of my daughter against the desire and even to the wounding of a Caraccioli, but is not one drop of Caraccioli blood of more value than an ocean of peasant blood? Thanks, my lords, thanks! It is more justice than we expected from a Caraccioli."

"Art mad, husband? Think of the peril of our daughter," whispered Donna Castelletta.

The count, smiling scornfully, saw that the listening nobles were amazed at the audacity of this brave and solitary old man. Their eyes, haughty with the noblest blood of Naples, sparkled and flashed angrily toward Cosmo with the fierce scorn for the peasantry that characterized their order.

The brow of the prince remained alone serene, while a melancholy gravity gathered around his lips.

He said gently, and to Vittoria his voice sounded like music from Heaven:

"Cosmo, thy anger and thy scorn are just. I know not what great injury hath ever been wrought against thee by a Caraccioli—except this crime of my brother—and only because he is my father's son do I not indict upon him the penalty of the ancient law of Del Parso—"

"I saw thee kiss the cross to thy dagger, prince, and heard thee vow to deal justly—"

"Does not the law read," interrupted the prince, as suddenly as the old man had interrupted him, "that the offender shall lose his right hand or pay

a thousand ducats to the injured maiden? Thou hast scornfully refused the ducats; and the law does not give to the injured the right to claim the right hand of the criminal when he proffers the fine."

"Thou art well read in the law of Del Parso, my lord," replied Cosmo, who was in truth amazed by the legal knowledge of the young noble. "I ask not the right hand, nor the left hand, nor a finger of Alfrasco of Zaponnetto. He who framed the ancient law of Del Parso was, of course, a noble, and he was not just, or he would not have framed the law or protect those criminals who may plead noble blood. See—a peasant maiden may be injured by some lawless ruffian. The law says, the criminal shall lose his right hand or pay a thousand ducats. What peasant criminal can pay a tenth of a tenth of so great a sum? What noble criminal can not pay even more? The peasant offender must, of course, lose his right hand. The noble ruffian laughs and pays the fine, for he can extort every sou of it from his serfs. I demand the head of Alfrasco of Zaponnetto."

As the brave old man spoke this demand he seemed to grow inches in height; his frame, always large and stately, seemed to swell to royal imperiousness.

"I demand the head of that great ruffian," he repeated, pointing haughtily at the count.

The count and the nobles uttered simultaneously a laugh that sounded from so many lips like a shout of scorn.

"He is a madman," muttered nearly all.

But the prince, wishing to teach his lawless brother a lesson, said, with that grave calmness he had continued to maintain so well:

"Silence, gentlemen. This old man's helplessness gives him a right to be heard. Cosmo, I know upon what thou foundest thy demand for the head of the count. If the injured maiden—though the injury be no greater than the attempt to injure, and no other violence be done—be of noble birth, the criminal, unless he be of legitimate noble birth, shall lose his head. Is that not the law?"

"True, my lord. The law demands that the head of the criminal, if the injured maiden or her father or nearest relative ask no sentence less severe, shall be chopped off from his neck on a butcher's block, to be set up in the presence of any ten men of legal age, the Count Del Parso presiding. Such is the ancient law of Del Parso, my lord, and the law—"

"Is still in force, Cosmo," interrupted the prince, gravely, and glancing sternly at the count, whose eyes now began to glow with a sombre glare of wrathful anxiety.

The nobles, too, were more amazed than ever. There was an air about the prince so wholly unexpected by any of them that a shuddering fear of something terrible yet to happen seized upon their minds, and their faces suddenly grew pale, and their eyes dilated.

Donna Castelletta, trembling, whispered something to her husband; but he put her aside with a madness which could have arisen only from the fierce wrath that instant in his soul, making him almost a madman.

"I will have the head of that Caraccioli!" muttered the angry old man, with a terrible glance at the pleading eyes of his wife and daughter.

Terrified and shuddering, the wife and daughter sank upon their knees near the father, clinging tremblingly to each other.

"Cosmo," said the prince, who had remained silent for several moments, wishing to make the lesson more severe to the count, and impressive to the other nobles, "I said I knew upon what ground thy demand for the head of the count is made. It is well for him that the demand can be legally met, and I trust that his narrow escape from capital and infamous punishment this day—I being, I hope, a just and resolute judge—will from this hour prompt him ever to respect the rights of the weak. The law says that the injured maiden shall be esteemed as of noble birth, even if no noble blood be in her veins, if at the time the offence be committed her father shall be temporary Count Del Parso, or one acting as chief magistrate of the province during the absence of the Count Del Parso. Is that not the law?"

"That is the law, my lord," replied Cosmo, whose powerful brown eyes flamed with an intense desire for vengeance upon the man that had attempted to abduct his child.

"And upon the plea that thou wert temporary Count Del Parso, and by right of royal commission, chief magistrate of the province, at the time Alfrasco of Zaponnetto laid violent hands on thy daughter, dost thou now claim the penalty of the law upon his neck?"

"In strict justice that plea should serve," replied Cosmo.

"In strict justice it will not, Cosmo. Thou wast not temporary Count Del Parso at the time of the deed; nor hast thou, by thy own admission, ever acted as chief magistrate of Del Parso; and there-

fore thy daughter cannot be placed upon the footing of one of noble birth. I, as Count Del Parso, will not admit that plea."

Lord Alfrasco smiled contemptuously at Cosmo, and a murmur of applause arose from the lips of the nobles.

"A most gentle and generous and justice-loving prince!" exclaimed one of the nobles. "It is well for thee, old man of the woods, that thy judge is not stern old Lord Gianni, the grand constable."

"Well, indeed," replied Cosmo, in a loud and sonorous voice. "His rare justice from a Caraccioli! Yet, my lord, I did not urge the plea which thou hast set aside. I said in justice it should serve. I have a stronger plea, upon which I again demand the head of Alfrasco of Zaponnetto!"

"He is a madman, Lord Colonna," exclaimed several of the nobles, in scorn.

"How he longs for my dear head," sneered the count.

A laugh from the gay nobles answered this sally, but the prince checked the unseemly merriment with a commanding gesture, and said, coldly:

"Thy plea, old man. We will hear it. But mark me, Cosmo! If it be false or foolish thou wilt be proved a knave or madman. If a knave thou shalt be scourged and imprisoned. If a madman thou shalt be chained, if only for the protection of others against thy madness. Now thy plea."

"Nay, husband, speak it not!" cried Donna Castelletta, springing to her feet and casting her arms around the neck of her husband. "I know what is upon thy tongue to plead. Oh, speak it not! Expect no justice of a Caraccioli! The utterance of thy plea will reveal the secret that has alone preserved thee to me and thy daughter so long! Oh, dear husband, be not mad in thy desire for vengeance upon Count Alfrasco! Remember thy wife—thy child!—how dear thou art to us! Oh, Cosmo, where is thy prudence!—thy love for thy wife and child? Are we nothing in thy eyes?"

"I would have the head of that Caraccioli," replied Cosmo, sternly; and yet he was evidently much moved by the words and caresses of his wife and child. "If Colonna admit my plea—thou knowest it is as firm as the base of Ætna—he must give me the head of Alfrasco. If he refuse it then all Italy shall know that this Colonna, 'the just,' is perjured even as his father is!"

"Of what benefit will either of these results be to us, Cosmo, since the utterance of the plea will draw the sword of Gianni Caraccioli across thy throat?" replied Donna Castelletta, weeping bitterly upon his bosom. "Thy wife made a widow—helpless, forlorn—nay, perhaps dragged to the scaffold, for is not the ban also over my head? Thy daughter made an orphan, at the mercy of the sea Caraccioli!"

"Enough!" exclaimed Cosmo, sadly, as one gives up a dear prize already within his reach. "My own life I value not a rush—but my lips must not send thee to the scaffold."

"Thy plea, old man!" here demanded the prince, who with his companions had not heard a word of the above. "Thy plea, old man, or for ever hold thy peace upon it, true or false."

"My lord," replied Cosmo, humbly, "and only his wife knew what agony of soul was his as he forced his haughty nature to appear humble before a Caraccioli—! I ask nothing, says to be permitted to depart in peace to my cottage with my wife and daughter."

"It is granted," said the prince, kindly. "And henceforth, Cosmo, think not that all of my name are monsters."

But at this instant a shrill whistle rose upon the air; a hundred like it instantly replied on every side of the green and from the summit of the steep rock above; and a powerful voice startled the nobles with these words:

"Surrender, or no quarter! Surrender to Rixzio di Siccardoli! Show out, swords of Sicards!"

CHAPTER VIII.

There was silence deep as death,
And the boldest held his breath
For a time. Campbell.

Two nobles around the fountain, startled by the clamour of the sudden whistling in the woods on every side, had already drawn their swords for defence when the words quoted at the end of the preceding chapter pealed like a near thunderbolt in their ears.

All eyes were instantly turned toward the spot whence the command had been spoken, to behold a man of tall and majestic figure, clad in armour composed of myriads of minute links of the finest Milan chain-steel, fitting his broad chest and shoulders and his powerful yet symmetrical limbs as neatly and closely to all appearance as the tight-fitting velvet garb of Galpas, the page—a glittering and flexible garb of steel, whose weight seemed as light upon the athletic frame of the wearer as the hunting garments of silk, leather, and velvet of the nobles.

Sicards wore as a single surcoat, or upper gar-

ment, a tunic of some green stuff, coarse and strong, the skirt of which reached to his knees. This tunic, open at the breast, revealed his breastplate beneath.

He wore on his head only a small, light cap; but near him stood a youth in Moorish garb, holding a small, round shield and the helmet of a knight.

The brigand had leaped suddenly from his leafy covert the moment he thundered his demand for the surrender of the nobles, and as their amazed eyes fell upon him he was in the act of drawing his sword, which the youth near him had just given him in the sheath.

There were but four of those near the fountain who had ever seen Rizzio di Sicardo before that moment—Cosmo, Donna Castelletta, Vittoria, and Borrelli.

The others had all heard much of him—so much indeed that the utterance of his name had alone sent a thrill of fear to the boldest heart among them. "Throw down your swords!" cried Sicardo. "Yield on the instant, or ye shall be riddled by the quarrels of a hundred crossbows!"

The nobles, glancing about them on every side with the lightning rapidity of sudden terror, saw that the summit of the rock bestrewn over them was crowded with men, bearded and fierce-eyed, levelling crossbows at them, and only awaiting a signal from their leader ere they should hail down upon the nobles their darts of steel.

Gleaming eyes and fierce, swarthy faces were here and there partially visible amid the lower foliage which embosomed the fountain green; and though the nobles could not see with what weapons these below were armed they had no doubt that each lurker was at that instant holding deadly aim at their bodies with the most formidable hand weapon of that day—the Italian crossbow.

There were a few among the nobles who were brave and resolute men; but nearly all were gay young patricians of Naples, who had never held a weapon save in their fencing-salons, or in some trivial duel with a brother butterfly, or as an ornament and a toy.

They were unarmed too, for they had no expectation of encountering more than a single fugitive brigand, and very little thought that they were to see even one, when they set forth at an hour before dawn on that day from Atrani to hunt for their missing chief, the prince—some of them becoming alarmed during the past night by his absence.

They had heard and laughed at the rumour that Sicardo, the brigand of Sicily, had crossed over from that island, and had been seen lurking in the quiet province.

That he should dare to appear at all within the limits of the Neapolitan kingdom, without a single follower, would have been scarcely more an amazement to them than that he had made this daring invasion of Del Parco at the head of his entire band.

But they saw the man who a few years before had defied all the power of Naples to capture him, and who had suddenly vanished from the kingdom after his rescue of his betrothed from the ruffians of the Count of Zappone—frightened away, some said, by the efforts which the lawless and vindictive count had begun, after that bold deed, to effect the death or capture of the brigand.

They saw him now and their imminent peril; and almost to a man they threw their swords upon the ground at the second command of the formidable outlaw.

There were two nobles, however, older than the others, men of nerve and daring who had faced death often in battle, who did not throw down their weapons.

Nor did the prince, who flashed a haughty defiance from his blue eyes as he sternly met the steady and commanding gaze of the brigand chief.

The sword of the count was in twain on the grass, but he had snatched that of Borrelli from its sheath, and now stood sword in hand, glaring hate and defiance at Sicardo.

"Yield!" cried Sicardo again. "Resistance will be vain, Lord Colonna, and I am not one likely to show much mercy to a Caraccioli! Yield, and your lives shall be spared. I swear it."

"The lives of all here?" asked the prince, who knew well the hate of the brigand towards the count.

"The lives of all, even of Alfrasco, for the sake of Lord Colonna, who hath dealt towards the weak and untitled this day with a gentleness never before seen in a Caraccioli!" replied Sicardo. "For thy sake, Colonna, of Torre del Greco, I spare, at this time, the life of thy brother."

"And our purses and jewels, Sicardo?"

"Time—ever open to the poor—Lord Colonna, shalt be to me inviolable. The purses and jewels of the others must fall into the hands of my followers. Let thy companions be content to retain their lives and their clothes. Attempt to make no more conditions with me, my lord, for already I am scarcely able to say again I will spare the lives of all I see before me."

"We yield!" said the prince, casting his sword

to the ground. "T'would be vain to resist, my friends, and we have yet to hear that Rizzio di Sicardo, brigand though he is, hath ever broken his pledge."

His two armed companions imitated his example in sullen silence.

But Alfrasco of Zappone, clutching his sword, the heavy and excellent weapon of Borrelli, scowled at Sicardo, and muttered:

"Ay, he ever holds sacred his word, be it given in promise or threat! He hath threatened to cut off my ears and nail them upon the banner-staff in the Largo del Mercato, and he hath that purpose in his eye now!"

No sooner had the prince and his companions cast down their arms than several of the hidden brigands rushed from the woods, in obedience to a gesture from Sicardo, and seized upon the surrendered weapons.

Other brigands came swarming in from the woods until Sicardo's whole force, except a few who remained on the summit of the rock, formed a great semi-circle around the fountain, but at such a distance as to leave a large open space between themselves and the nobles.

There were more than a hundred of these brigands, and the terrified nobles recognized among the swarthy, ferocious and bearded faces many notorious criminals of Naples who had been at various times banished for their crimes, or who had fled from punishment well merited and recorded against them.

All of the many races of which the population of the kingdom of Naples was composed were represented by these sturdy, fierce-visaged outlaws; and there were among them also Sicilians, Romans, Venetians and Spaniards, with here and there the tall, broad-faced German, and the keen-eyed, dark-browed Frenchman.

Lances, axes, swords, cross and hand bows, daggers and javelins made up their arms, and many of them wore more or less armour.

They seemed, in brief, a mighty herd of human tigers; beasts of prey in the form of men, with the ferocity and rapacity of wolves in sight of helpless sheep.

Neither Cosmo, his wife, nor Vittoria had bestowed a glance of welcome or even of recognition upon Sicardo from the moment of his appearance.

A shudder of fear, or of dislike, or horror, had quivered through the frames of the three at the sound of his voice; and then the two women bent their eyes to the ground, each clasping the hands of the other in a tremulous grip.

Cosmo held his stately white head erect and gazed coldly and haughtily at his son with eyes full of scorn.

Vittoria did not know, had never even suspected that this formidable and famous brigand chief was her brother. Twice before, years ago, she had seen him, each time but for a moment, appear at the door of her father's cottage, only to retreat as suddenly as he had appeared, as her father had shouted at the would-be intruder:

"My curse upon thee if thou darest to speak to my daughter! if thou stayest one instant longer in my sight!"

Her father had told her afterwards that the man was Sicardo, the brigand, and that the speech of his breath would be to her as fatal as sleep with a loper.

Thus Sicardo, in the mind of his sister, was a monster of evil, whose very glance was a thing of terror; and hence her extreme fright when she first saw the face of her unknown brother peering through the foliage.

There was in her mind a most erroneous belief, as firmly rooted as it was erroneous, and conceived in the vagaries of a delirious dream, that Sicardo wished to make her his wife—or one of his wives—for false report had told her and her parents that Sicardo had a score of wives in his stronghold in Sicily.

The appearance of the dreaded brigand, backed by a force before which the nobles had trembled and cast down their arms, filled the innocent and timid heart of the maiden with a fresh horror.

Cold and trembling, she was unable to whisper of her terror to her parents.

She knew not that she had ever had a brother, for she was born to her parents only a few years before Cosmo and Castelletta had disowned their son. Vittoria was not seventeen; Sicardo was thirty-five. The remembrance of the brother who had carried her on his shoulders in her early childhood had long since faded from her mind. It was true that she vaguely remembered a handsome and powerful youth to whom she was much attached in her childhood, in some country which was not near the fountain of "The Forester Range," but whenever she of late years had spoken of that youth to her parents they had sighed and said:

"That dear youth is no more. Heaven be merciful to us—and to him! Forget him!"

Sicardo was that youth, grown to be infamous in

the minds of his parents. Sicardo was her brother, and she had never heard that he was the son of her parents.

There was not one in all Sicardo's band save himself that knew he was the son of the brave and hapless old man called Cosmo the Forester—for Borrelli was no more a follower of the famous brigand. Borrelli was a deserter from the troop of outlaws.

Sicardo had sworn to his father never to make known to any one the relationship; and Cosmo, much as he scorned and detested the reputation of his son, knew that the oath would be held sacred by the brigand.

Yet, as the reader has already learned, the secret was now known to Borrelli, Manfredi, Galpa, and Lord Alfrasco.

But of this Cosmo and Donna Castelletta and their son knew nothing.

It is well to explain at this point how Borrelli discovered a secret which had never been told by the lips of Sicardo. Borrelli, from his youth, had been a Neapolitan thief. In his manhood he became a follower of Lord Alfrasco, but still a thief, and a secret agent of the brigand near Naples.

About two years before the date of this story he robbed and dangerously wounded a Jew of Naples. The crime forced him to fly to Sicily. There he joined the band of Sicardo. After nearly two years of this life—which was too full of peril to please him—he learned that Lord Alfrasco would obtain his pardon from the grand constable if he would desert Sicardo's band and return to the service of the count.

He gladly deserted, and, well disguised, made his way to Naples. But on his journey he tarried for one night at the cottage of Cosmo.

He slept on the floor of the cottage kitchen, for he was afraid to sleep in a bed lest he might sleep too profoundly to be easily aroused if any enemy were at his heels; and he dreaded that Sicardo had sent some one in pursuit to slay him.

The forester overheard him talking in his sleep, and discovered that his unwelcome guest was a deserter from the band of Sicardo.

Cosmo awoke him, and, warning him that he knew him to be a brigand, inquired much after Sicardo.

The deserter, eager to establish a kind of innocence for himself, made the hair of the old man stand on end with horror as he told hideous falsehoods against Sicardo.

Donna Castelletta, hearing these atrocious statements, and, like Cosmo, fearing all was true, fainted from shame, grief and horror.

Cosmo bore her quickly to her bed in the adjoining room and closed the door.

Borrelli had the ears of a lynx. He heard distinctly the first words uttered by the mother as she regained her consciousness—these:

"Oh, my husband! to hear these things of our only son—"

"Silence!" said the deep and warning voice of the father.

And Borrelli heard no more.

But he had heard enough, and neither the father nor the mother suspected that he had heard a word.

Cosmo himself had not distinguished clearly these few words which had put their secret at the disposal of a rascally robber; for at the moment of their utterance a roar like that of approaching brain-stroke was in his ears.

Perhaps had not his beloved wife swooned the old man himself might have been smitten to insensibility by the emotions of his grief-stricken soul as he heard the hideous falsehoods told of his son by Borrelli.

Donna Castelletta knew not that she had uttered those words above a whisper of grief and shame, nor what she had said.

Vittoria, awake in another room, did not hear them, for there were two closed doors between her and her mother when they were spoken. But Vittoria had heard, and with icy horror, the terrible stories told by Borrelli of Sicardo.

Therefore the words "Oh, my husband! to hear those things of our only son!" were unheard by all save Borrelli—for the unhappy mother knew not what she said. Borrelli held the discovery in his brain, as he thought it might be of use to him in the future.

He resumed his journey the following day, and in time arrived in Naples, was arrested, tried and sentenced. But the influence of Lord Alfrasco saved him, though the count was at Zappone.

On being set at liberty Borrelli had hurried to return to the count's service at Zappone, arriving in time to be one of the party with which the count intended to abduct Vittoria, though, as has been seen, the count did not see fit to inform him of the design until they were at the fountain.

There was one sentiment which the brigand possessed in an eminent degree—fear of Sicardo's vengeance for desertion. This fear had continued to increase in Borrelli's heart from the moment he learned what part he was to play at the fountain.

To aid in the seizure or disgrace of the daughter of Cosmo was to commit a terrible outrage upon the sister of Sicardo. To refuse to aid in the matter was to brave the wrath of the count, and Borrelli feared the count scarcely less than he did the brigand chief.

Borrelli therefore hoped to turn the count from his design upon Vittoria when he said to him: "My lord, she is the sister of Sicardo!"

Had the count been checked by this statement Borrelli would have had something to plead for mercy for himself were he ever to fall into the hands of Sicardo.

As the reader knows, the reckless count scouted the thought of relinquishing his evil purpose.

So when Borrelli was crouching in the hollow awaiting the coming of Vittoria he was also thinking of some means by which he could aid the maiden to escape after she should be captured—and only because he dreaded with a mighty fear the future vengeance of Sicardo.

From the same motive also he protected Cosmo from the rage of Manfredi—intending to speak of that deed if ever he fell into the dreaded grasp of the brigand—and at the same time to gain the goodwill of the prince, who, it will be remembered, had commanded that the old man should not be hurt.

After that, and before the sudden appearance of Sicardo and his band, Borrelli had congratulated himself upon the turn affairs had taken, and determined to keep secret the fact that Cosmo was the father of Sicardo, since the count so desired.

"If ever Sicardo hears of this affair," thought the wary Borrelli, "he will hear that but for me his father would have been slain by Manfredi."

The reader must imagine the horrible terror that seized the heart of Borrelli when he heard the voice and beheld the flashing eyes of his late chief, and saw the faces of that ferocious band whose first law was:

"Death by torture to any of our number who shall desert the 'Swords of Sicardo.'" And the "Swords of Sicardo" was the title of the band of brigands who recognized no chief but Sicardo.

(To be continued.)

THE HEIRESS OF CLANRONALD.

CHAPTER XLII.

DAISY prosecuted her fruitless search until the darkness of night compelled her to desist, then she turned her steps in the direction of the ghastly western wing of the Manor.

The beech and oak boughs rustled in the night winds, and down amid the bracken brakes a night bird was croaking dismally.

A sudden horror fell upon the girl's brave heart—not a horror of ghostly apparitions but of some awful event that seemed to wing its sombre flight above her.

She stood still, her cheeks ashen, her eyes distended, her hands pressed hard against her throbbing heart, listening in an agony of dread. And above the whisper of the winds, above the roll of wheels and the sweet sounds of the music that was just beginning in the park, broke an awful, awful cry.

"Murder! murder!"

It was a cry fraught with the last frantic agony of human fear and pain. It came again, chilling the blood in the poor girl's veins.

But, impelled by an impulse stronger than her own weak will, she followed in the direction whence it proceeded, till she heard the terrible cry die away in gurgling, inarticulate murmurs.

On, and on, she flew, blindly, half unconscious of what she did.

A flying figure darted past her, crashing through the underbrush with winged feet, but she took no notice.

On she went till she reached the spot, a hawthorn hedge on the very verge of the park.

Two figures met her eager eyes—one prostrate, bleeding, dying, the other standing over him with a knife in his right hand.

And with a cry of horror she recognized this one, this murderer standing over the bleeding form of the Earl of Shaftonsbury, as her own brother, Ichabod!

For one breath of time she stood quite still, her wide, black eyes fixed on the dreadful scene, and then her cry of agony startled all the silent night into a tremor:

"Oh, Ichabod, what have you done?"

He looked up quickly.

She could just see his face in the dim light of the setting moon. It was awfully white, and his hands shook as they held the knife.

"He's dead," he said, speaking in a wandering kind of way, as if the shock had half dazed him; "that was his last gasp. Poor fellow! I pulled out the knife in hopes he'd live, but he's dead. I'm

scared, I'm sorry. I hated him while he lived, but I'm sorry he's dead."

Daisy felt as if she were going mad.

"Oh, Ichabod!" she cried, in an agony of torturing doubt, "for Heaven's sake, speak to me—tell me the truth—did you murder this man?"

"I?" he said, with a half-childish laugh, turning his clear brown eyes upon her, wide with wondering surprise at the question. "Why, no, Daisy; you surely know I didn't murder him! I was crossing the park and heard his cry—such a cry of pain and agony—and when I reached him he was down, with the knife in his breast. I pulled it out, but it wouldn't save him. Poor fellow! What an ugly hole it is! How could he do it? Oh, it makes me giddy!"

He dropped the weapon and turned away, white and shuddering. Daisy caught him by the arm.

"What are you talking about? Do you know who did this?—who murdered Lord Shaftonsbury?"

"Yes, I know; I saw him when I came up."

"Saw whom?"

He began to speak, and then stopped short, a swift gleam lighting his eyes, as if some sudden thought had struck him.

"Hut!" he murmured, under his breath. "Does she love him, I wonder? It might kill her if I accuse him; and what would Mary say? No, no, I can't betray him. After all, it may be nothing more than a suspicion."

Daisy felt her strength failing and her limbs giving way as she heard his incoherent murmuring, and came to the conclusion that he had lost his mind, and in his insanity perhaps had really committed the awful deed.

"Oh, Ichabod!" she cried, piteously, still clinging to his arm, and striving to drag him away from the heart-rending sight, "are you in your senses? Do you know me, Ichabod? What makes you look so strange?"

He smiled and turned his large, clear eyes full upon her.

"To be sure I know you," he replied. "I'm not crazed, but this awful sight makes me ill. Come away—quick, quick! I want some one else to find him, and we'll never tell what we know—that'll be the best way—come!"

He seized her hand, and was hurrying away as fast as his poor feet would carry him, when they came almost face to face with young Squire Renshaw and Doctor Wurt, the old Ryhope surgeon.

"Don't stir!" whispered Daisy, hoarsely; "don't look frightened!—you'll be suspected if you do."

A startled look came to Ichabod's face; he had not thought of being suspected before; it would be an awful thing to be accused of murder. The thought blanched his cheeks and made him tremble where he stood.

Daisy held his arm with the grip of a vice.

The two men came up rapidly, conversing in low tones, right up to the spot where the murdered earl lay, with the knife beside him.

Mr. Renshaw saw him first.

"Great Heaven!" he cried. "Look there, doctor!"

The old man looked, and an expression of horror overspread his face. In the next breath he caught sight of Ichabod, and the little incident of that Christmas morning flashed like lightning through his mind. Striding to his side, he caught him by the arm.

"Boy," he questioned, savagely, jerking him round in order to see his face, "are you a murderer?"

Ichabod did not speak, and the face he turned toward the doctor was ghastly white; but his clear, soft eyes spoke for him.

The old man let go his arm.

"No," he said, "you are innocent; 'but what are you doing here—you and Daisy? What does it mean?"

"I heard him cry," he replied, simply. "I was on my way to the Manor. It was an awful cry. I dropped my violin and ran; but when I reached him he was down and the knife was in his breast. I pulled it out in hope to save his life. What an ugly hole it made! Is he quite dead, think you, doctor? Can't you do something for him?"

The doctor bent down an instant over the still face looking up to the glimmering stars.

"No," he replied, "he's past help. Who murdered him? Did you see any person at all, Ichabod?"

Ichabod averted his face and did not answer. The doctor and Mr. Renshaw regarded him curiously.

"Ichabod Doon," said the old man, solemnly, "do you know that you will be charged with this murder?"

A quick tremor shook him, still he did not speak.

"You will be charged with it," the surgeon went on, "and it'll go hard with you too. You had better speak out all you know. Who did this deed?"

"I don't know."

"But you suspect? Who was it you saw?"

No answer.

"Daisy," said Mr. Renshaw, kindly, "did you see any person?"

"No, sir; the earl was murdered, and no one here but—but—"

She paused, her great eyes dilating with fear lest she should implicate the brother dearer to her than her own life.

"Never mind, don't speak if you do not wish," said the young squire, with emotion. "Heaven will make it all right, and come what may, I will stand your friend."

"You'll be forced to bear witness against them," put in the doctor, earnestly.

And his words were true. Half an hour later all Ryhope was in a flutter, and the grounds about the Manor were crowded with a surging, excited concourse of people. And before the autumn night was gone Ichabod Doon was under arrest and confined in the Ryhope prison to await his trial.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A SWEET and solemn peal of bells from all the steeples in green-hilled Durham, and a jubilant outburst of melody from every bird that fluttered amid the beech and bracken announced the Sabbath—with bluer skies and balmy winds and brighter sunlight than the plodding week days ever know—bringing rest to the poor man, worn with his weekly toil, and the promise of rest eternal to all mankind.

In the lowest cell of the black-roofed Ryhope prison sat Ichabod Doon, gazing with great, wistful eyes through the grated bars at the happy world without.

He was a prisoner, charged with murder. There was a solemn expression on his face which showed that he felt his disgrace and wrong keenly enough, but at the same time a look that was half akin to happiness shone in his eyes, a serene, patient content, as if through the departed night he had made himself fully acquainted with his fate, and determined to accept it, let it be what it might.

For an hour perhaps he sat there, his thin hands clasped, his eyes bent upon the outdoor sunshine, his ear strained to catch the slightest sound.

And after awhile the heavy door grated on its hinges, and light footsteps rang down the dark corridor.

Daisy entered, but she was alone.

The poor prisoner's lips began to quiver.

"Daisy," he whispered, as she clasped and kissed him, "have they found her?"

His interest in Miss Ryhope's mysterious disappearance swallowed up every other fear or emotion.

Daisy shook back her heavy hair and wiped the streaming tears from her cheeks.

"No, Ichabod," she answered, sadly, sitting down beside him on his straw pallet, "they have not. Every possible search has been made, but they can find no trace of her. It is very strange."

He stared blankly through the rusty bars, his lips still white and quivering.

"Gone!" he said, in a breathless kind of way; "dead, maybe! No, I can't betray him! I must bear it for her sake! For her sake," he repeated, slowly, a smile of ineffable sweetness lighting his face; "it is easy enough, for her sake!"

Daisy was watching him furtively, with a lingering fear that his reason was impaired.

"Oh, Ichabod!" she cried, at last, throwing her arms about him, "I wish I could bear it in your stead. Oh, what shall we do if you are convicted of this crime?"

"Heaven will help us—I am innocent!"

"Yes, you are innocent, but you are keeping something from me, Ichabod, something that would clear you of this suspicion. Who murdered the earl, Ichabod?"

"I have said I do not know."

"But you suspect?"

"I shall never utter my suspicions."

"Not even to save yourself?"

"Not even to save myself, Daisy."

"Heaven help us then!" she cried, burying her face on his shoulder and bursting into passionate sobbing.

"Heaven will help us, my poor Daisy," he replied, tenderly. "I am sorry, because it grieves you so—but for myself I don't mind it—'tis easy to bear—easy to bear," murmuring under his breath, "for her sake! She shall never have cause to say that I brought ruin on her—"

But he did not finish the sentence, and Daisy took her leave more in the dark than ever.

In the meantime in the great drawing-room at Ryhope Manor lay the body of the murdered earl, with that ugly, gaping wound just above his poor, silent heart.

All through the sunny Sabbath day the dreadful news was sent flying through the length and breadth of England, and every incoming train brought some new arrivals—relatives, friends, acquaintances of the murdered peer. The Manor grounds were thronged throughout the live-long day by eager, excited people, who came to hear the strange and dreadful story.

The marriage that was so near being completed

the evening previous, and the mysterious disappearance of Miss Ryhope, were mixed up with the murder in a way that was really startling; and all the blame and crime were packed upon Ichabod's slender shoulders.

The details of the case were clear and concise enough. Miss Ryhope was gone, and her affianced, indeed her wedded husband, one might say, as the marriage ceremony had been well nigh finished, was murdered. Of course his murderer had some hand in Miss Ryhope's disappearance—all that talk about the ghost of the dead and buried baronet was simply nonsense. Miss Ryhope had been kidnapped—torn from the altar by the man who murdered Lord Shaftonsbury.

And that man was Ichabod Doon without doubt. All Ryhope was cognizant of his silly passion for Miss Ryhope; he had loved her for years, and had attacked the earl once or twice before in his insane jealousy. At the time of the murder he was held under bonds for threatening the earl's life.

Of course he was guilty. Did not his sister by her own confession find him over the murdered man with the knife in his hand? And Squire Kenschaw and Doctor Wurt saw the same thing.

If there was a shadow of a doubt left Sir Eustace Ryhope's testimony dissipated it.

Returning from Bathurst, while riding through the grounds he heard voices in angry altercation. As he neared them, impelled by curiosity, he leaned from his saddle, and peered through the foliage in the direction whence the voices proceeded. He saw the Earl of Shaftonsbury and Ichabod Doon standing together, engaged in an angry discussion. He thought nothing of it, however, as the two were known to be at enmity, and he rode on toward the stables, and in ten minutes thereafter he was notified of the murder.

"But I'll do all I can to clear him for your sake, Daisy," he said, speaking to the poor girl after her brother was committed. "He shall have the best counsel that money can procure."

"But do you believe him guilty?" she asked, lifting her clear eyes to his face.

He paled visibly, and his countenance faltered and fell.

"Heaven knows," he replied, a hoarse tremor in his voice; "it isn't for me to say. He might have done it, Daisy, and yet not intended it. You know that might have been?"

"No, I don't know it," she replied, her dusky eyes flashing lightning. "I know he is innocent—his hands are clear of Lord Shaftonsbury's blood. They may accuse him and condemn him, but the right man will be found eventually. He will make it clear, Sir Eustace."

He fairly gasped for breath, his face ashy, his lips livid.

"Don't," he faltered; "don't look at me so, Daisy. I'm not to blame, am I?"

Something in his craven face struck the girl like a flash. She turned from him with shuddering disgust.

"That is best known to yourself," she replied, meaningly, as she walked away.

He followed her and laid his hand on her arm.

"Don't treat me so cruelly, Daisy," he entreated. "I want to be your friend, Ichabod's friend. You'll let me help you in your trouble?"

Some feeling in Daisy's heart that she could not understand, a kind of subtle instinct beyond her comprehension, warned her to throw back and refuse this proffered help. But what would Ichabod do? He must be defended at his coming trial; and this rich baronet, who was her betrothed husband, who had a better right to help her? She must accept his offer. Yet, as she turned to do so, that same white, craven look on his face made her shudder, and she rushed from his presence without a word.

He watched her out of sight, with a lurid glitter in his eyes.

"She must be mine now," he muttered, under his breath; "my wife—her interest must be my interest, whether she wills it or not."

He turned on his heel, and strode straight to his mother's boudoir. She was reclining on a Turkish couch, in a very tasteful negligé, awaiting the coming of Lord Raeburn, who was to make her a call that morning, and her handsome eyes betrayed some little surprise as her son entered.

"Well, Eustace," she said, pushing a chair out in front of her, with her slippered foot, "be seated, my son!"

He obeyed, sitting for a few moments in sullen silence, then he looked up.

"Mother," he said, abruptly, "I want money."

She started slightly, and raised her eyebrows in well-bred surprise.

"Money? I thought your revenues were exhausted, Eustace," she replied.

He scowled at her fiercely from under his lowering brows.

"The Ryhope income is pretty fair," he responded; "nevertheless, I want money, and must have it—a large sum—and I do not care to make a

stir about raising money just now. How much of your private income can you let me have?"

"What do you want with it?"

"No matter—how much can you let me have?"

"None, unless I know what you want it for."

"Well, to defend Ichabod Doon at his coming trial, for one thing."

"Eustace, you are mad."

"Perhaps so, but will you give me the money?"

"No!"

The purple veins swelled out on his temples, and his eyes began to blaze with that peculiar greenish light they always wore when he was unusually excited.

His mother's white fingers fluttered nervelessly as they lay on her lap, but she kept her blue eyes on his face in a steadfast gaze—a dangerous, desperate face it was.

"Well," he said, slowly, in a hoarse voice, "if you refuse the money I shall manage to get it, and in a way you won't like perhaps."

"Eustace," said Lady Ryhope, "take my advice for once in your life—let these people go, drop your hold on them, and let the law take its course. 'Tis the best thing you can do. I will send that girl, Daisy, away, and we'll wash our hands of the whole set."

He leaped to his feet and confronted her in fury.

"Send her away at your peril!" he cried. "Before the month ends she will be my wife, and mistress of Ryhope Manor—do you hear?"

She grew so white that her very lips were blue and rigid.

"Eustace," she replied, with a significant smile in her mocking eyes, "it will be well not to manifest an over amount of interest in this case. If you do not manage your cards with skill you may possibly betray something that you are desirous to conceal."

He started, and grew white to the lips, and his knees shook under him. But after an instant he rallied, and turned upon her with a face equally significant.

"There are other secrets than mine that might be brought to light," he said, speaking with slow and taunting meaning, "fully as dark too as any you hint at. We are even on that score. Let us be friends, not enemies."

He held out his hand as he spoke.

She hesitated a moment, shutting her teeth hard to keep down her wrath, and then she laid her own within it. She dared not risk his anger—she feared her son almost as much as she loved him.

"The girl will remain?" he questioned.

"But you will promise not to marry her?"

"No, I'll promise nothing. And the money? I want five thousand pounds by to-morrow night."

"Eustace!"

"I tell you I must have it—it will save me from ruin, disgrace. You must raise it somehow. You can sell diamonds, and resort to various ways that are closed to me. Don't forget now."

He strode out and down the broad staircase. She listened to the last sound of his step, then clasped her jewelled hands in an agony of irresolution.

"He holds my secret," she soliloquized, "and I hold his, which makes a balance of power. Well, he must have the money, I suppose. I would sell some jewels if I could manage it secretly. I don't like to break in on my private income. If Lord Raeburn—" she paused, a swift blush colouring her white cheek. "Ah, well, I must manage it somehow. No poor mortal was ever so badgered as I am! I thought I had May all snug and safe; and in the hour that made her a countess that awful—Heavens! what can it all mean? Where has she disappeared so mysteriously? It makes me shudder to think of it! And now it will be just like Eustace to marry that girl. She's bewitched him. The duchess was right—I was mad ever to suffer her to enter my house. I wish she were snug in jail with her brother. I cannot regret the poor old earl's death, since it has caged him! And Eustace's secret is safe now. If only the marriage could have taken place, so that May would have inherited his estates! I won't fret over it, however. I only hope the girl has gone for good—she was so like her father."

A hard, repellant look filled her eyes, but she shuddered and glanced over her shoulder like one in mortal dread.

"I wonder if I couldn't manage some way to dispose of that girl, Daisy?" she continued, leaning back amid her cushions, and sniffing at her jewelled salts-bottle. "I must do something. Eustace must not be left to marry her. If I don't bestir myself she'll out me out of the Manor before I know it. I have sufficient cause to hate her and her dark beauty. What shall it be? What plan shall I fall upon? I have never failed; surely my good angel won't desert me now in this my direst extremity!"

CHAPTER XLIV.

A CRIMINAL trial was something new in Ryhope. Not for centuries had anything so startling as the

murder of an earl taken place in that quiet neighbourhood, hence the excitement was intense.

All through Ichabod's imprisonment crowds of visitors, possessed of that morbid curiosity which such occurrences seem to awaken, flocked in from different counties to look upon the poor boy branded with the terrible crime of murder.

On the morning of the trial, a crisp, sunny morning in November, all the lanes leading from the out-country into Ryhope, every street and by-path, the common around the court-house, the gloomy prison-yard, even the private porches and the roofs of the village houses, were literally jammed with eager spectators.

The "Ryhope Arms" was filled with illustrious guests, lords and baronets from London.

"I ha' lived in Ryhope two-score year come next May Day," said Dame Trout, the portly landlady of the above-mentioned establishment, "an' I'm free to say my eyes has never seen the like o' this—which it was a pair o' lords and an' Ingy colonel, besides no end to lawyers an' doctors which we've had to victual an' bed since this thing begun—an' they as free wi' their shillins as poor folks be wi' pennies. It be a drefful thing, an' I can't sleep o' nights a thinkin' o' that cretur in jail; but, as I telled Trout this mornin', it be a ill wind as blows no one any good, an' the good's blowed to us this time, as sure as my name's Nancy Trout."

Belief in Ichabod's guilt was almost universal. How could he be otherwise than guilty detected as he was standing over the body of the murdered earl with the knife in his hand? The popular mind could not bring itself to conceive anything else, and the boy's guilt was a theme of gossip throughout the length and breadth of England; every soul from the Lord Lieutenant himself to the ragged scoundrel around the prison believing in his crime. And the fact that he was guilty, that he, a poor, deformed shoemaker, had dared to love the daughter of a peer, and had murdered an earl who was to be her husband, raised the poor lad to the level of a hero. They counted on seeing quite a dangerous and desperate kind of person in the prisoner's box that morning—a person who had horns and hoofs, not a few believed.

The strange story of Miss Ryhope's ill-starred marriage and mysterious disappearance had got well afloat, and the tenantry along the Wear had given the tale their own version. It was all of Ichabod's doing.

"As they do say," said Dame Trout, her stout arms akimbo, her Saxon eyes wide with superstitious awe, "they do say as he has dealins wi' the old un, an' it was all his work which have sperited that poor, pretty young thing away. Tulip, my lady's attendant, telled me wi' her own tongue as the ghost o' Sir Roger Ryhope himself appeared and caught up the pretty bride jest as the waddin' ring was a slippin' on her finger. It makes my hair rise to think on it, and never a wink o' sound sleep do I get o' nights. And Dame True, as keeps the 'Light House,' you know, she says, and a truthfuller woman never wagged a tongue, she says, and that blessed night o' the waddin' and the murder, as the light burnt blue in the tower, an' there was an awful shine upon the river, an' she see somethin' like a man a walkin' on the water, which she believes was Sir Roger's ghost. And Ryhope was such a quiet place, and now, as I telled Trout, it's not safe for the best of us. An' all that poor, crippled creature's work. It'll be a mercy if he don't brew a storm wi' his horrible works and maybe make his escape before they make safe o' him, and a drefful thing that would be, as I telled Trout, a drefful thing for us all. Not as I be an't sorry enough for his sister, wi' her pretty face and great shining eyes—it's a thousand pities for her, which in course she ain't to blame."

The excited populace that seethed and surged through all the Durham lanes that bright November morning expected to see a very dangerous and desperate man before the Ryhope bar, and consequently were most signally disappointed when Ichabod, with his slight, boyish figure, and fair, girlish face, walked up and took his place in the dock.

There was a general murmur of surprise and satisfaction. Was that the man—the murderer? Any other man in the court looked more like it than he. But the public had made up its mind that he was guilty, and the same public saw no plausible reason for changing it. Yes, he was the man, for after all there was something peculiar in his face, especially about his eyes.

Happily unconscious of their feelings in regard to him, and also of their cruel, curious gaze, Ichabod passed up and took his place in the dock. There was no hesitation in the movement of his poor, deformed feet, no drooping or faltering about his boyish figure, no tremour or embarrassment in his face. On the contrary, it wore a strange, shining look that did not seem to belong to earth; the brow was like marble, while the hollow cheeks and sweet, girlish lips glowed with a vivid bloom, a hectic bloom, alas! and the great, wistful, brown eyes were as clear and serene as the unruffled bosom of a

summer lake. If he had ever had his human frailties and weaknesses they had all dropped off that morning, leaving his soul free, redeemed, purified, to shine out through his poor, frail body.

After the usual preliminaries the trial began, and the question was put:

"Guilty or not guilty?"

The boy looked out at the patch of blue sky, dimly visible through the window, as he replied to this question with a solemn, far-off look in his eyes, as if his Creator, and, not the county clerk, had asked it.

There was an uneasy rustle all over the crowded court, as the clear, unhesitating "Not guilty" came in response. Even the Ryhope villagers, set and stubborn in their belief, experienced a momentary doubt.

There were three lawyers for the defence, all famous London men; only two for the prosecution—the attorney and a small, wiry, dark-faced individual whom nobody knew.

First of all Sir Eustace Ryhope was called, and went through what he had to say in a glib and rapid manner, that gave one an impression of its having been learned by heart. The only visible emotion he betrayed was when he came to that part of his evidence where he testified to having seen the earl and Ichabod Doon in angry discussion. Something seemed to choke him for an instant, and he made an involuntary clutch at his collar, as if to tear it open.

The next witness called was Doctor Wurt. He and Squire Renshaw were the main witnesses in the case; both men whose veracity was known and trusted throughout the county. The lawyers looked up alertly, and poor Daisy turned her sad face toward the old man with a look of piteous appeal.

Would he be good enough, the attorney asked, blandly, to state to the court what he knew of the case in question?

Yes! Walking through the Park, in company with Mr. Renshaw, on the evening of Miss Ryhope's disappearance, he came upon the body of Lord Shaftonbury, lying on the ground, and bleeding freely from a wound just above the heart.

"Were any other persons present except himself and Mr. Renshaw?"

"Yes, Ichabod Doon and his sister." Daisy dropped back as the old doctor uttered these two names, concealing her hopeless face beneath her veil, but Ichabod looked on calmly, without a single tremour.

"Did the prisoner say anything about having pulled a knife from the wound?"

Yes, something of that kind; he could not be wholly certain about it; but the purport was that the prisoner heard an awful cry as he was approaching the Manor, and, rushing to the spot, found the earl gasping on the ground, with the knife in his breast, just as the cowardly murderer had left him, he added, in his hurry to make good his escape.

With the concluding words he flashed a keen and significant glance towards Sir Eustace, who stood not far off, breathlessly absorbed in the evidence.

The young baronet moved uneasily beneath the meaning glance, and for the first time his face paled, blanching to such an unearthly pallor that every one in range of him must have noticed it.

Daisy, who had looked up again, bent her great, wondering eyes upon him; a sudden tremour shook her from head to foot, and she leaned back in her seat, paralyzed by the horrible conviction that had flashed unbidden through her mind.

Squire Renshaw followed the doctor, and merely corroborated his evidence, his kind face full of the unutterable pain it cost him to do so.

Then Daisy herself was called.

Daisy took her place, and stood fronting the bench, with a face from which every trace of bloom and brightness seemed to have flown for ever.

Sir Eustace made a movement to approach her where she stood, with the intention of supporting her in her trying ordeal, but she waved him off with a gesture of unutterable horror and loathing.

The attorney put his questions in a skillful manner; but he had his pains for nothing.

Her answers were utterly incoherent and meaningless; no amount of tact could bring her to the point. She admitted that she saw the murdered earl, but she knew nothing of the murderer. Was not the prisoner on the spot when she reached it? Did not she see him with the knife in his hand?

She did not know; it was all like a dream to her. But the lawyer pressed her close, and then she turned, like a lovely wild creature at bay, her cheeks crimson, her eyes flashing.

"I won't!" she broke out, passionately—"I won't swear my brother's life away! You may imprison, torture me, but I won't do it—because he's innocent."

The attorney hesitated; but his assistant, the sinister-looking stranger before alluded to, arose for the first time.

Ichabod arose in the dock at the same instant, and held up his slender right hand.

"Let me speak," he said, with an imperial calm in his clear, young eyes; "don't force her to testify against me—it hurts her so—poor Daisy. Let her sit down and hear me. I was there when she came, standing over the body of the murdered earl, with the knife in my hand. I pulled it out of his breast when I reached him, hoping to save his life, but it was not my hand that murdered him—Heaven knows!"

There was a sudden startle all over the court, like the effect of an electric shock. The lawyers looked puzzled and the judge on the bench rubbed his bald head and stared at the prisoner in amazement.

Very few of those stolid men could get at the prisoner's meaning.

Old Doctor Wurt bowed his head and drew his hand across his keen gray eyes; and Mr. Renshaw crossed the court noiselessly and planted his tall figure at poor Daisy's side.

After what Ichabod had said the attorney seemed inclined to let the matter rest, so far as the poor, agonized sister was concerned, but his assistant remained at the bar and begged permission to ask her a few questions.

She confronted the court again, all the old wilful fire of her childhood blazing in her eyes.

Could she call to mind any expression or action on the part of the prisoner which seemed to indicate that he had hostile feelings against the murdered earl?

Daisy's "No" was half contemptuous as she hurled it back in answer.

Was she sure? She was. He thought she must be mistaken, begging her pardon, for, if he had been rightly informed, it was on Christmas morning of the past year that the prisoner, Ichabod Doon, in his own house drew a dangerous knife upon Lord Shaftonbury, threatening, and even making an attempt to murder him.

And again, only a short time since, he had renewed his murderous threats, and had been put under bonds by the court for his good behaviour. Could she call either of these occurrences to mind?

Poor Daisy, who had never dreamed of this half-forgotten affair, dropped her eyes in painful embarrassment, and then her glance, full of piteous inquiry, turned from one to another of the faces of the two persons who, besides herself, had witnessed these fatal scenes.

These two persons were Sir Eustace Ryhope and Doctor Wurt. Which one had been cruel enough to put this harmless affair into the hands of a merciless court to be magnified into a crime?

Her eyes asked the question, and the two faces answered it—at least, the doctor's did; the young baronet's only grew a shade more glastly.

But the lawyer was waiting for her answer. She must give it. Did she remember the occurrence of Christmas Day? Yes—no—nothing definite—and without waiting for permission she left the box, with a look in her eyes that showed that farther questioning would be of no avail.

But there were other witnesses, and they were at once put before the jurors.

Doctor Wurt and Sir Eustace were eye-witnesses to the prisoner's former attempt to murder the earl; and all the old doctor's tact failed to conceal the fact that Ichabod had actually raised his knife against the earl, and in anger.

It was a strong point against him, stronger than any yet brought forth, and it wrought an instantaneous change in the minds of the jurors. They had begun to entertain a shadowy doubt of the young man's guilt, and were willing to be convinced of his innocence; but, hearing this, they veered back to their old belief in his absolute guilt, more especially when they had heard the young baronet's testimony, a clear and truthful testimony, but cunningly told, so as to impress the minds of all who heard it in a wonderful manner.

The dark-faced lawyer took his seat with suppressed exultation. He had not counted on such a signal triumph.

The senior counsel for the defence followed him in a most powerful appeal in the young lad's behalf, but it seemed to have little effect on the jury.

The strange lawyer had the right of making the closing speech, and he made the most of it.

When the day closed, and the court adjourned, every one felt that the prisoner's doom was sealed.

(To be continued.)

A MINIATURE model of the famous statue of Frederick the Great is at present being cast, by order of the German Crown Prince, at Herr Ghudenbeck's foundry, at Berlin. It is intended as a present to the Crown Prince of Italy. The cost of the diminutive statue will amount to 10,000 thalers.

THE LATE SIR HENRY HOLLAND.—The death of Sir Henry Holland leaves England with only one of

the old worthies who rallied round Fox and exchanged wit with Sheridan. Earl Russell is the sole survivor of the brilliant gatherings of Holland House in its best days. If he has prepared an autobiography, or left material for one, it must be by far the most interesting book of the kind that has been published this century. Sir Henry Holland gave a book of "Recollections" to the world some time ago, but being of an essentially secretive turn of mind he scarcely touched the vast and interesting field of anecdote which we should have expected in a work of the kind.

TOBACCO-POISONING.—A fatal case of poisoning by tobacco is reported in the Naval Medical Report just issued. It occurred in the person of a boy of the "Implacable." He had been frequently punished for chewing tobacco, and had often presented himself at the sick bay complaining of debility, giddiness, and faintness, which were traced to the poisonous influence of tobacco. On two occasions he had swallowed pieces of tobacco to prevent detection. On the night of his death he went to his hammock, telling his messmates that he felt sick. About ten minutes afterwards the occupant of the next hammock to his heard him breathing stertorously, and immediately tried to awake him. Finding he could not, he was conveyed to the sick bay, and at once seen by a medical officer, who found him moribund. The pupils were insensible to the influence of light; and the pulse, which was scarcely perceptible, in three minutes ceased to beat. On post-mortem examination of the body two small pieces of tobacco were found in the stomach.

AN ANCIENT CUSTOM.—In accordance with a very ancient custom in connection with the Shrievalty of London and Middlesex, and one which is always observed on the eve of the festival of All Saints, Mr. Henry de Jersey (the Secondary of the City of London), Mr. Nelson (the City Solicitor), and one of the Under-Sheriffs, attended before the Queen's Remembrancer, filed and recorded, in answer to a royal warrant, the accounts of the sheriffs for the past year. After this a proclamation in these words was made:—"Tenants and occupiers of a piece of waste ground called 'The Moors,' in the county of Salop, come forth and do your service." The City Solicitor upon that stepped forward, and cut one faggot with a hatchet, and another with a billhook. The usher then proclaimed:—"The tenants and occupiers of a certain tenement called 'The Forge,' in the parish of St. Clement Dances, in the county of Middlesex, come forth and do your service." In reply, the City Solicitor again presented himself and counted six horse-shoes and sixty-one nails. The Queen's Remembrancer said "Good number," and the ceremony, which had lasted but a few minutes, ended.

ATTORNEYS' CLERKS AT POLICE COURTS.—Mr. D'Eyncourt and Mr. Mansfield, the Marylebone magistrates, have justly decided that, "in the interest of the public, as well as for other reasons, it would not be desirable in future for attorneys' clerks, either articled or managing, to be heard." Henceforth, at the Marylebone police-court, "no other than a duly qualified attorney will be heard." Mr. Mansfield, who made the announcement, said the privilege of clerks being heard had lately been grossly abused, and he instanced a case of a clerk who, each time he appeared before him, brought a letter from a different attorney. No doubt this decision will be inconvenient to some members of the profession who have not abused the privilege; but in the interests of the profession they will, we doubt not, cheerfully submit to the inconvenience. Very likely an experienced clerk can, in many cases, efficiently represent his principal in a police court; but for the protection of the public no one should be heard as an advocate in any court unless he is a duly qualified member of the profession. Police courts and county courts are infested with loafers, who, by pretending that they are attorneys' clerks, defraud both the public and the profession. The only way to put a stop to this vile system is the rule adopted at the Marylebone police court. At the county courts persons calling themselves accountants, or agents, or collectors, are always on the alert to play the part of representatives of litigants. This the judges ought not to allow. If the plaintiff or the defendant deems it prudent not to conduct his own case he should employ a solicitor. There should be no exception to the rule that he who appears by attorney before a court of law must be represented by a duly qualified member of the profession.

THE MONUMENT TO BURNS IN GLASGOW.—A meeting of the Glasgow Burns Monument Committee was held in Glasgow recently, Mr. W. Wilson presiding. The secretary (Mr. Gordon Smith) read a draft of the terms of arrangements made between the committee and Mr. G. E. Ewing, sculptor, as to the execution of the statue of the poet. They commission Mr. Ewing to execute a pedestrian statue of Burns about nine feet high, with

pedestal and bas-reliefs in bronze. The price for the statue is to be 1,200*l.*, bas-reliefs 500*l.*, and pedestal 300*l.*—in all 2,000*l.* The whole work will be completed within 15 months from the present date. The secretary said the total amount subscribed was 1,634*l.* 17*s.* 4*d.*, exclusive of interest.

WHO IS HE?

By the Author of "Lord Dunsin's Error," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XXII.

Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings.

THE next moment Lady Isabel recollected that she had ordered a composing draught to be brought for her invalid aunt, as she called Mrs. Craven.

She went at once and opened the door. One of the maids was there with it. She took the glass of steaming cordial from her and dismissed her.

"You have run a terrible risk in coming off in this way, my lady," Mrs. Craven resumed, as her lady came back to her, the latter not yet out of her eyes. "You have put yourself completely in the power of a desperate and awful enemy. Nothing can save you from him if he was discovered where we have gone. He will never let us go back to London alive, and if he wants to kill you what better chance could he ask for than this you have given him? Who would think of looking for you here? Who would suspect either him or Sir Robert of having any hand in the business if you were found murdered here?"

Lady Isabel made a half-frantic gesture and put the sleeping draught to Mrs. Craven's burning lips.

"Drink it and go to sleep, for Heaven's sake," she said. "Do you want to drive me into such agonies of fear as you are in yourself? Go to sleep, I tell you, or I'll run away and leave you here alone!"

That threat had the sleeping draught together obtained obedience to her command. Mrs. Craven sat at her eyes and covered them with her thin little hand.

In five minutes she was asleep, and Lady Isabel, after looking at her thoughtfully for some minutes, went and examined the door she had just fastened after the maid, and then retired into the next room, where her boy was sleeping in his pretty, picturesque dress, just as he had thrown himself down, tired with the unaccustomed fatigue.

She stood looking at him with his bright, sweet face flushed with slumber and his soft curls tumbling over his pure forehead.

"It's a pity to wake him and undress him," she thought; "and the noise might wake Mrs. Craven again. I'll leave him as he is."

She lay down beside him without removing her own dress, thinking she would do it after a while.

She was not sleepy. On the contrary she felt extremely wakeful.

Everybody in the house seemed at last to have gone to sleep but her. She found it impossible to close her eyes. The instant she shut them the lids flew up again as if hinged on springs.

She had closed the door between her room and Mrs. Craven's for fear of disturbing her. Therefore, when she presently heard some slight sound which she would not have noticed at any other time, she could not at once decide whether that sound came from the room in which Mrs. Craven was sleeping or from the other side. It was such a slight sound too; but in the excited state of mind which Mrs. Craven's wild terrors had induced she could not feel easy again till she knew which room this came from. She had put out the light when she lay down.

She rose and groped her way toward the communicating door. Some trifling obstacle caught her foot, and she nearly fell, but recovered herself without noise.

The next moment the sound she had heard before was repeated. It did come from Mrs. Craven's room, and though Lady Isabel could not at the moment imagine what it was like, a thrill of nameless terror ran through her.

She reached the door; her hand was on the latch. It would not lift!

Instantly she thought with a wild heart-beat that some one was holding it down on the other side. Then trying it again she concluded that the button which fastened it had either fallen forward in closing it or had been turned by some one, perhaps Mrs. Craven herself.

She was about to call to Mrs. Craven when she distinctly heard a man's voice mutter an oath in the next room. At the same moment there came a sound of struggling.

That sent a current of fire through Lady Isabel's veins. She threw herself frantically against the door at first. But, though a slight affair, she could

not force it open. She stopped and listened again; the struggling had ceased. Rapid steps crossed the room. She heard a window raised or lowered, and, looking toward her own, saw a man dart past it.

In an instant she had the window open, and was screaming "Murder!" at the top of her voice. A long, narrow balcony, protected by an iron railing, ran along this side of the house, and the windows of both her room and Mrs. Craven's opened upon it.

A man was climbing over this railing at the very moment she uttered those screams. She could not distinguish his face in the darkness, but his form was plainly visible.

Without stopping to think she stepped through the window upon the balcony and ran toward him. He dropped to the ground before she reached him, and she saw him cross the court and scale the low wall beyond.

Hugh, awakened by her screams, was calling "mamma" in frightened tones.

She turned to go back to him and saw that the window of Mrs. Craven's room was open. Instantly, as if something stronger than herself moved her, she darted to that and entered the room, calling: "Mrs. Craven! are you here—are you safe?"

As she uttered the words she stumbled over some obstacle stretched upon the floor, and fell.

The next moment she uttered a horrible cry.

The obstacle was Mrs. Craven's motionless body. By this time the whole house, roused by her screams, was rushing to and fro, seeking the cause of the uproar.

In a moment they were at her own door, shaking and pounding it, and demanding admittance.

Lady Isabel got upon her feet, unlocked and threw the door open, and the landlord and his household poured in.

The lights they carried showed poor Mrs. Craven lying with purple face and protruding eyeballs—a horrible sight—dead—the breath strangled out of her, for there were the vivid prints of fingers upon her little slender throat.

My lady lifted her hand.

It was limp and nerveless.

"Run for a doctor," some one suggested.

Lady Isabel burst into tears.

"A doctor won't help her," she said. "Get him, but it will not help her. One has been here who had too deep an interest in her death to leave life in her. Poor creature! you warned me of this, but I would not believe you, and my disbelief has cost you your life."

The landlord and his troop stared, but my lady did not explain at that moment. She suddenly remembered that she had heard no sound from her boy for some moments.

Like an eagle whose young are threatened, she flew to the door between the two rooms.

It was still locked, and her trembling fingers slipped from the button again and again.

A man servant had to undo it for her at last.

She rushed through, the others after her.

The room was empty, the couch tenantless! The boy was gone!

Without sound or sign he had vanished and left nothing to trace him by.

My lady was like a mad woman.

"It is that dreadful, dreadful man," she wailed. "He will murder my boy as he has murdered Mrs. Craven."

"Something is wrong," one man whispered to another. "I saw them when they came in; it was a girl instead of a boy. I believe she's clean crazy and has killed 'em both."

My lady heard him and grew calm instantly.

Hastily removing her wig of yellow hair, she confronted them, with her eyes like blazing coals, but her face death-white, as she spoke, solemnly:

"My boy is the heir of immense wealth. He has enemies who would hesitate at nothing to get him out of the way. I dressed him as a girl, and disguised myself and poor Mrs. Craven, and ran away with him. That dead woman in yonder was my faithful attendant. They have murdered her—they have got my child. It only remains to kill me."

She stopped and covered her despairing face with her hands. Then suddenly she looked at them again.

They seemed affected by what she had said. She took out her purse and held it before them, the gold pieces shining through the silk, full to the brim.

"I will give this to him who brings me the child safe. He can't be far away."

The men stared at the money and at her.

"Mount!" she cried. "Take horses and ride in every direction. Find him, and you shall each have a purse like this."

The men turned and ran fleet as deer to do her bidding. What if she were mad, the money was as good.

They reached the stables—they took horse like wild men. But as they touched saddle one said, slyly:

"We haven't searched the house or the court, or her own room. She is mocking us. She only offered the money to have the child brought to her safely, and she knows he is dead."

They all stopped aghast at that suggestion when Lady Isabel herself rode into their midst. She had come too, but they had not seen her in the confusion and darkness. Some one had saddled a horse for her, and she sat him like some awful and beautiful spirit of the night.

"Let one stop and search here," she called, in scornful, ringing tones. "The rest ride, ride to save a human life. A thousand pounds to the man who brings me the child, dead or alive!"

She tore away herself through the darkness and the night, and the rest, catching the contagion of her excitement, sped after, separating in couples as the roads diverged, and riding in such mad haste that their hoofs clattered like stones on the beaten way.

My lady was first. She rode like the wind, outstripping them all. But not knowing any of the roads she went unconsciously upon a route the boldest among them would not have dared to take at that hour, for, besides leading through a region dangerously scattered over with abandoned chalk pits, it was haunted by a sort of gentry to whom the chance of securing such a purse as my lady's seldom came.

No one saw which way she had gone, however, and she, fancying, after a time, that she caught the sound of rattling hoofs in the distance, rode wildly on with her small teeth shut hard and her breath coming in quick pants of frenzy and excitement.

The tramp of the hoofs ahead grew fainter. She urged her own horse more desperately, though the way was rough and now and then huge gulfs of blackness, whose nature she could not guess, seemed to yawn on either side.

Suddenly her steed stopped short, neighing with terror, and trembling in every limb. She leaned upon his neck and strove to pierce the blackness. What did she see there? She beheld absolutely nothing! Yes, nothing, for that was not solid ground upon which another step would have set her horse's feet, but black void—emptiness!

She sat up in her saddle shuddering, and trying to look behind her, pulling the rein at the same time.

That moment the animal was struck furiously from behind a rain of fiery blows, which the brave but terrified creature bore unflinchingly at first, only champing his bit fiercely and stamping with his feet, while the startled rider, horrified but not panic-stricken, strove to turn him back upon the way they had just come.

But neither man nor beast could have faced those stinging lashes, that never ceased to descend without other sound but their own triple hiss through the air.

The horse turned half round, furiously, as if he would trample down his enemy, be he man or fiend.

But that demon lash cut the air again—right across the animal's face this time, in his very eyes.

With a snort of agony, mad with the pain, the creature wheeled, with the bit between his teeth, and took the leap.

My lady had the nerve even then to brace herself for the plunge, whatever it might be. She had hunted with her father in his lifetime, and the experience then got of desperate riding served her like instinct now.

As rider and horse went down a demon voice followed them:

"Ho, ho, ha!" it laughed; "a brave night's work! I may laugh now, for I have won!"

Then a spur cut deep into the sides of the speaker's reeking steed, and back like some dark and horrible grinning demon he sped. Past the chalk pits safely, for he knew the way of old—past the town, alive with men searching for the lost child and the mysterious lady who had come and gone so strangely—he rode silent as death, save for that horrible laugh that now and again mocked the night. He rode as if the spectres of his victims were on his track.

He must have known every inch of the way by daylight or darkness, for he never hesitated, but rode straight on, even when he came to another town on the line of the railway.

Past that he rode and still on. Without checking his horse in his mad speed he pulled out his watch, the jewels on its case flashing like demon's eyes as he struck a match, and, sheltering it with his hat, looked at the gold dial-plate.

Half-past two! and at three the London express came from North Charlton. Could he reach it in that time? He shut his teeth hard, and vowed he would, desperate as the chances seemed.



[THE MURDERER ESCAPES.]

On, and still on—past Beckley. Three miles yet and his horse showed signs of giving out. He had ridden him hard; deeper still he drove the cruel spur, and, wild with pain, the frenzied steed tore on, yet seeming as if every step he would drop but for that brutal grasp upon his bridle rein.

North Charlton was in sight. He could see the lights of the station. Far away he fancied he could hear the whistle of the coming train. Then his horse, staggering, sank to his fore-knees.

The rider was off in a flash. He had a brandy flask in his side pocket. Forcing the jaws of the jaded steed wide open with one hand, he poured the burning contents of the flask down his throat and leaped into the saddle again.

The animal bounded like a lost spirit in torment. The whistle of the coming train sounded shrill and nearer.

On, still on he sped!

A quarter of a mile away the train was in sight when the horse fell dead—beyond the reach of brandy flask or spur.

"I must make it myself!" the rider hissed, as he loosed himself just in time from the motionless horse and tore away one foot.

Far from North Charlton, at the bottom of an old chalk pit, lay the mangled, dead form of another steed.

Thanks to a nearly miraculous Providence and her own wonderful self-possession, my lady was almost unharmed. A scratch or two and a dazed brain were all the hurts she had. She was her cool, courageous self in ten minutes. She did not know how far she had fallen, but she knew the fall had killed her horse, and she remembered the blows that had driven him to his death and what had meant to be hers.

"It was that man again," she said, to herself, with a horrible thrill. "Ah, if in hurrying after me he has spared my boy I will forgive him," she murmured.

Then she heard voices, and saw the blessed gleam of light far above her.

The town had come in search of her.

She called at the top of her voice, and they answered her.

Then a man was lowered by a rope, and amid joyful cries the pallid but undaunted lady was drawn to the surface.

"Have you found the boy?" she demanded.

No one answered her, for the child had not been seen, and there were wild and awful rumours abroad concerning his fate.

Lady Isabel read their silence aright.

"He is dead," she said, with terrible calm, "but his murderer lives, and justice is not dead."

And then she went back with them to the town and stood a moment beside the waxen corpse of poor murdered Mrs. Craven, and vowed to that white image that if she lived justice should be done her also.

She sent for the magnates of the town. She told her story with eloquent tongue and electric looks. She doubled rewards, and sent men out like so many hounds to track the murderer.

In the midst the morning express from London came in, and, ten minutes after, Sir Robert and false Maurice presented themselves before my lady, stern and unrelenting as fate.

"Where is Champion's heir?" demanded they, with characteristic effrontery. "He was last seen with you, Lady Isabel. What have you done with him?"

"Ask him," my lady responded, growing more like marble than before, while her quivering, snow-white finger pointed at her lost husband's wicked counterfeit.

False Maurice quailed a moment, in spite of him, beneath the blazing menace of her beautiful eyes.

Sir Robert answered for him.

"It is vain and worse than useless to accuse him, Isabel," he said. "Your husband has but now come from London with me. Where is the child? We came the instant we discovered your absence. We know that a woman who denies her husband could scarcely be responsible for the safety of her child. Now, where is he?"

"Ask him," again returned my lady. "He was here this night. Mrs. Craven is dead. My boy is gone. Heaven's miraculous hand alone saved me. Who but he and you have an interest in so many deaths?"

Then she rose to her feet, pale and breathless, with glittering eyes, like some beautiful Nemesis.

"Heaven has spared me, Sir Robert, and both you and he shall come to justice yet."

Sir Robert frowned furtively at his confederate. Crawley shook his head and shrank. His nerves were frightfully unstrung for some reason. The sight of my lady, the story of her marvellous rescue from a horrible death had been an awful shock to him.

Sir Robert turned angrily upon his heel and walked to the window.

The impostor's dark glance followed him a moment, then he turned desperately upon Lady Isabel.

"You will go with us to London, Isabel," he said,

in a harsh, unnatural voice. "This matter must be investigated."

"It shall be investigated. I live but for that now," the lady's undaunted tones replied. "Come with me to the next town, you villain, and then I'll go with you to London. You dare not. I expected that."

Crawley's face was indeed like ashes.

Without looking again at my lady he went to Sir Robert.

"All is lost if you cannot get her away to London," he said. "Mrs. Craven did not die soon enough; she had already given her a clue."

"You must face it," Sir Robert answered, in the same low voice.

"I dare not," and the man whitened and shuddered, and, looking away toward the distant town, seemed to see some hideous and appalling sight that made his very marrow creep and his teeth to clatter against each other like castanets.

Sir Robert eyed him a moment in pale curiosity. Then he lowered his glance thoughtfully.

"No matter," he muttered, to himself; "the more deadly his secrets, the more his soul is weighted with crime, the more surely we are rid of him when all is done. He is but a tool after all, and I have kept clear of his iniquities. One deed more and I care not how heavy the stone is that sinks him to perdition. Meanwhile, since no better can be done, it is best, perhaps, to conciliate Isabel till a more convenient opportunity."

He turned with a hypocritical and sanctimonious aspect toward my lady.

"Isabel," he said, softly, "my poor girl, your husband is quite overcome by your terrible denunciations. Whatever you wish shall be done. Heaven knows I wish to be just to you, and more than that. Promise that you will go with us to London to-night, and the day shall be given to searching for your child. You accuse your husband unjustly, believe me. He and I have but now come from London, I swear it to you."

My lady's white lips curved in a smile of unearthly scorn at this proposition and assertion.

"Let him come with me to Brenlaw first," she said, "and then I will go with you anywhere."

Sir Robert moved instantly toward the door.

"I go to look for a carriage, Isabel," he said. "We will go to Brenlaw, since you wish it so. Meanwhile, lest you should imagine or fear that some one tampered with the food, order yourself some breakfast, for you seem much overcome with fatigue and watching."

(To be continued.)



[THE DUKE MAKES A DISCOVERY.]

SHIFTING SANDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Elgiva; or, the Gipsy's Curse," "The Snapt Link," "The Lost Coronet," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XL.

Good-bye, proud world, I'm going home;
Thou art not my friend, I am not thine.
Too long through weary crowds I roam,
A riven oak on the ocean brine;
Too long I am tossed like the driven foam,
But now, proud world, I'm going home.

"I REALLY am so perplexed what to do, my dear Trissa," wailed Mrs. Digby, bringing a half-opened note into her daughter's bedroom before the young lady's breakfast toilet was fully completed. "Just look at what Uncle Fulke says. Really it was a most unfortunate thing, my dear, that you were so silly that day. If it had not been for that most embarrassing girl would never have come on the scene."

"Really, mamma, you may be very sure I did not do it on purpose," returned Trissa, gaily, for she with her volatile nature was not to be so easily daunted as her more far-seeing mother. "And you really ought only to value me more highly from the risk you have run of losing my precious self. But what is the fresh grievance?" she added, suspending the arrangement of her glossy hair to receive the proffered billet.

"Well, it's soon explained if you look at that. I think your uncle must be bewitched, and I must say I am beginning rather to like the girl myself, if only one knew who she was," continued the lady, rather reluctantly.

Trissa ran her bright eyes quickly over the page. "Well, mamma, I see Uncle Fulke wants us to go to an official reception at his house," she said, returning the note, "and offers us both—I mean Cora and me—new dresses at his expense. What can you wish more? I declare I will have the very prettiest to be had in all Bond Street, Regent Street, or Piccadilly. Capital old uncle, that he is, and no limit put to the amount."

Trissa clapped her hands with girlish exultation. Her mother gave an impatient seizure of the billet in question.

"Really I should have thought you were too old for such folly, Trissa. I don't mean about a new dress, for—"

"For that I shall always appreciate till the days of my dotage," interrupted the young lady, gaily. "Just think, mamma; what shall it be? Pale blue silk with black lace would be the thing, as it is not a ball; and a lot of old admirals and frumps will be

there. But what is your trouble, mamma?" she added, suddenly throwing her arms round the neck of the irate lady and kissing her troubled face.

"There, that will do, silly child," said Mrs. Digby, smiling in spite of herself. "Don't you see, my dear, that it wears a very suspicious appearance? Sir Fulke never once asked us before in this way, and I cannot remember his even comprehending that a woman needed more than a gingham for the very gayest party."

"And what is the awful consequence of the old gentleman's sudden enlightenment?" asked Trissa, demurely.

"It shows what a remarkable, wild fancy he must have taken for this unknown, strange girl," replied Mrs. Digby, gravely. "Indeed, in my opinion the money he allows her for her dress is exceedingly disproportioned to what is necessary, and now he is actually going to bring her on a complete equality with you, his own niece, and of a higher family even than his own. For my part I do not like such a violation of the rules of society in any case, even were you not concerned."

"It only shows his exceeding value for me, to recompense so highly the saving of my life then," replied Trissa, demurely. "I cannot at all share your alarm, mamma; and really I do think it is pleasanter since Cora has been here, and she helps me wonderfully in preparing for my masters, especially in singing and languages."

Mrs. Digby did not reply.

Trissa was too young to be trusted with her next ground of alarm, that her son might fall a victim to the stranger girl's attractions. It might even reach his ears and produce the very danger she dreaded.

"Well, my dear, I hope you will take all the benefit you can while she is here," she said, at length. "It will need all the tact and prudence we can command to avoid such evils as may accrue. However, there is now no alternative, and in the meantime I do not wish you to show any coldness nor yet too much warmth to your new companion. In either case it would be far from safe or desirable."

Mrs. Digby might surely have known better than to give such caution. When was so happy a medium preserved at barely seventeen? But she left her daughter with a comfortable sense of doing her duty, and her demeanour at breakfast had more cheerful composure in it than the morning's annoyance might have betokened, and the message of the old baronet was duly delivered, with a kind of cautious deliberation, as if the tidings of her good fortune would be too much for the girl's nerves.

To her astonishment it produced a very different and far weaker effect.

"Sir Fulke is very good, but I had rather not

go," was Cora's quiet reply. "Will you please to tell him so, Mrs. Digby?"

"Impossible, my dear," she returned. "If Sir Fulke wishes, it he will never take a refusal without being seriously offended. I quite agree with and approve your feelings on the subject if I read them aright. Still, I repeat it, you ought to go."

Cora well nigh shivered at the prospect. She recalled but too vividly the only large party she had ever seen—that fatal ball at Carew Manor—which had led to so much misery.

"Mrs. Digby, I should be ungrateful and sorry to do anything that would annoy or vex Sir Fulke, but indeed, indeed I had rather not go. Remember that all will be strangers to me. I am not one even of your own family. I cannot mix in such a circle. I only ask for quiet—to be left unknown—undisturbed, to do all that is in my power to be of any use, in return for the kindness I receive. Please try to persuade Sir Fulke to let me remain at home."

Mrs. Digby shook her head.

"I know him too well, Cora. He would not forgive it, no, never. I confess I do think it a very foolish and a very useless thing. Your views of your own station and circumstances are perfectly correct and do you honour, but at the same time, for this once, I believe you had better not attempt any rebellion to Sir Fulke's will. He has been accustomed to implicit obedience, and all you can do is to keep as quiet and retired as possible, and dress as unobtrusively as is consistent with the occasion."

Cora gave an impatient gesture, her old spirit was fast rising.

"It is indeed slavery," she said. "I would rather be in my old bondage than run the risk of being despised and blamed. However it is the price the poor founding must pay, and I can but bear it as I may."

Mrs. Digby looked at her with a perplexed air. She had certainly anticipated anything but this. She presumed the obscure orphan would have snatched eagerly at the offered gaiety—the unwonted possession of rare and becoming dress. And yet she spoke of slavery and misery as the consequences of this youthful happiness.

"You are either a very sensible or a very discontented and ungrateful, proud girl," she said, at last, "and it is very difficult to understand you, Miss St. Croix. However as you are gracious enough to accept Sir Fulke's offered kindness and generosity it only remains to choose the dress you are to wear, as there is not much time to lose. Miss Digby will I think wear some delicate colour," she continued. "I scarcely suppose you will wish to be at all like her in dress?"

"No, no," exclaimed Cora, fervently, the memory of that miserable day flashing full upon her. "Let it be black, that will be most suitable and it can attract no attention. May it not, Mrs. Digby?" she added, looking up in the lady's face with a pleading air.

Mrs. Digby was perhaps touched for the moment by the evident sincerity of the girl. She stepped forward and touched her brow with her lips.

"Well, I do believe you are a good child, though there is so much mystery about you," she said. "And it is not your fault certainly if you are dragged forward into positions that are completely unsuitable for you. As to your costume, I think perhaps I can meet your wish and the ideas of my old uncle, since you have such sober notions on the subject. I think a black lace dress would be very quiet and unobtrusive, as well as quite sufficient even for my own or Sir Fulke's daughter. So, if you and Triassa go with me this afternoon to Madame Louton, we will see what can be done to meet your views and my own. Of course, in any case, you will strive to remain in the shade with me. I assure you anything else can only lead to a bitter disappointment and mortification to yourself."

Cora bowed coldly.

She needed not such an admonition. She had suffered too much already from the false position in which she had been placed. And then what had she to gain or to expect even were she to be distinguished by the utmost admiration beauty could command? Her heart had been seared and crushed already, young as she was in age.

Rupert Falconer had proved unworthy of her love, though the whole warmth of her childhood had been unconsciously lavished upon him; and Sibbald Carew had but veiled intense and dangerous passion under the mask of paternal affection; while Ernest—poor Ernest—had indeed suffered for her sake only too cruelly in the loss of rank, friends, fortune till the danger shall pass away, the miserable episode be forgotten, and then he would return to assume his rightful position and claim the heiress of the Biddulphs for his fitting bride.

Would Cora envy her should such a result arise? She scarcely could read the mazes of her heart, so strange and bewildering had been the circumstances in which she had known Ernest, and so little could she guess how his real character would appear in other and less exciting and dependent situations than those she had shared with him in their remarkable career.

It was a singular contrast to see those two girls as they pursued their occupations that afternoon. The intense eagerness of Triassa Digby, her doubt and deliberation as to details of the coming toilet were anxiously feverish when compared with Cora's calm indifference to aught but the good taste and quietness of her costume. Yet it was doubtful whether the astute and practised eyes of the modiste did not give the palm to the more unpretending dress of the beautiful unknown, instead of the brilliant costume chosen by the grand niece of Sir Fulke Wilton, admiral and member in the cabinet of the day.

CHAPTER XLII.

Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome marrow,
Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride,
And let us leave the Braes of Yarrow.

The eventful evening had arrived; carriage after carriage was rolling up to the doors of Sir Fulke, at his official residence in Whitehall.

And his niece and her charges were detained some quarter of an hour or more in their arrival at the portal of the mansion, contrary to the preparations made for an entrance at the critical moment between the solitary grandeur of the host and an unnoted throng.

Yet it was not altogether an unpropitious instant that witnessed their debut.

Sir Fulke was just shaking hands with one of the foreign diplomats whom he had known during his roving, and as he greeted Mrs. Digby and her young charges he took the opportunity of presenting the envoy to their acquaintance.

"Helen, my dear, take care of my friend, M. le Comte de Bettune," he said. "Triassa and her friend will be at no loss how to converse with him, though he almost ignores his own tongue in favour of the language of his adopted Italy; is it not so, M. le Comte?"

The foreigner bowed smilingly alike to the presentation and the remark.

Indeed it was but too true.

The Count de Bettune had possessions from the mother's side in Italy's sunny clime, and had been brought up chiefly in that land of song.

No wonder if he prided himself too much on that parentage and education, and cared little for the more light and frivolous tongue of his ancestral France.

But, albeit natural, Triassa Digby considered this circumstance extremely to be deplored. The

stranger was handsome and distinguished in appearance and air. He possessed a distinguished name and the prestige of the diplomatic corps. Triassa considered him a worthy and eligible prize, and yet—as she felt—there was small chance of her being able to catch him by the forced fascination of her lively talk.

For the moment the comte appeared to be attracted by the golden-haired blonde. But a trial or two of her linguistic power concluded any attempt at conversation, and he gave a half-despairing, half-hopeful glance at Cora's brunette countenance.

"Perhaps the signora is a native of Italy," he said, appealingly—so piteously indeed that Cora could scarcely forbear from a smile.

Her reply was in such pure Italian that a bright look of pleasure lighted up his dark features.

"Ah, you are indeed wonderful then, if such is not the case," he said. "Perhaps you have lived in the land if you are not one of its daughters."

"No," was the response, "by no means. I have only known two countries, except the one in which I passed my first years of childhood, but I love languages, and I used to hear Italian frequently spoken in the place where I was brought up."

M. de Bettune could have listened for hours to his own musical language spoken in that soft, liquid voice, and he attached himself so decidedly to Mrs. Digby's party that his presence and the tongue spoken by himself and that beautiful girl attracted unusual attention from the crowded salon.

And when Sir Fulke next joined them he found his niece the centre of an admiring throng.

"Helen, we should have some music," he said to his niece. "There is a splendid instrument in the music room, and harp, and other instruments, for those who care for such strummings."

"My dear uncle, had I known, and you had done me the honour to consult me, I would have advised professionals in such a large party," returned Mrs. Digby, regarding Triassa shrinkingly and with an uneasy and furtive glance at the calm and unshuffled face of her new ward.

"Not a whit. That is always a great insult to one's friends in my opinion," returned the old baronet. "It is almost saying that none of them has the talent to amuse. Cannot Triassa sing?" he added, sharply.

"My dear uncle, what an idea! what could put it into your head? Triassa is but a child, and of course timid. She could not sound a note I'm certain among all these people!"

"More goose she," replied the old baronet. "It only shows she thinks more of the listeners than the music."

"Cora, child, you can sing. I wish it," he continued, looking at the girl with the half-peremptory, half-kindly air he always assumed towards her.

The girl drew back.

"It is not becoming for me," she whispered, in too low a voice for any one else to hear. "Remember, dear sir, I am an obscure stranger here," she added, glancing timidly around at the crowd.

"Pooh, child, pooh! If I wish it you have no reason to refuse. It is my own house or I should not insist on it, but you surely need not hesitate when your guardian requests."

It was irresistible in the ideas it brought to the girl's mind. Sir Fulke was her benefactor; he had saved her from what might well be called a more professional occupation than the temporary service he asked. And she quietly bowed and prepared to yield to the request.

M. de Bettune led her deferentially to the music saloon.

"If I might judge from your voice in speaking we shall need no more matured vocalist," he said. "Indeed everything about you, signora, betokens a native of my own dear land."

The girl laughed slightly.

"In what respect?" she asked. "Because I happen to be dark haired? Is that your test, M. le Comte?"

"Not entirely; your toilet was one other criterion—so unlike the gay butterflies of this island."

Cora glanced round and then her eyes fell on her own black dress, softly and gracefully falling over her silk robe. It was certainly worthy of her own beauty and the intentions of the admiral. The priceless lace, the rich scarlet trimmings, and the one beautiful gold chain and cross that encircled her fair neck, were indeed becoming to the brilliant brunette, being as they were in pure taste and contrast to more glittering colours around.

She scarcely vouchsafed a smile to her companion's compliment—she was half troubled, though she scarcely could have defined why, at the very failure of the veiled concealment she had sought. Such distinction had never been sought but a forerunner of misery to her, and it might equally threaten now.

But she had little time to dwell on such anticipations. They had reached the music room, and she had no alternative save to place herself at the piano

and commence her song. A few minutes' pause, just to recall the words and air, a half-gesture of impatience at her own weakness, and then a volume of rich, sweet melody poured into the ears of the listeners and filled the room with its liquid sweetness. Here was a splendid voice, there could be no doubt of it, rich and round and equal in the whole register, and if in her early youth it was scarcely matured to its full power, and lacked at present the masterly execution it would one day attain, such little defects were more than compensated by the freshness and the purity of her tones and the simplicity of her rendering even a familiar melody as she poured it out.

"Who is she? what a voice! How very lovely she is!" was buzzed on every side. And Mrs. Digby and Triassa stood in a completely remote corner with irrepressible feelings of annoyance and jealous pique.

"Triassa, have I not always warned you of this?" muttered the mother, reproachfully. "You never would pay proper attention to your accomplishments, and now you are totally eclipsed by an unknown stranger."

The reproach was scarcely likely to increase the young lady's charms, and the response would scarcely have been quite becoming in a petted and only daughter, when Granville Digby suddenly appeared near his mother and sister:

"Mother, Sir Fulke has sent me for you to make up a whist table with some of his more especial guests—Lord—"

But she could not catch the name, Cora's last symphony chords were being struck, and a buzz of compliments poured upon her.

Mrs. Digby glanced at the two girls.

"How can I leave them, Granville?" she said, hesitatingly.

"Oh, I will see to that, and bring them near enough to be under your shadow as soon as the music is done; but Miss St. Croix will sing once more, I expect, since there is such wailing for a repetition of the treat."

Mrs. Digby was fain to obey. She could give no adequate reason for refusing what was no doubt intended as a distinction for herself and the admiral's especial guests. So with a whispered injunction to Triassa, and brief admonition to her son, she walked from the spot.

As she left the music room a young and distinguished-looking man entered it, and Mrs. Digby could guess that he was of high rank from the deference paid to him by those who were of his acquaintance.

"What a voice," she heard him say to a lady whom he just greeted. "It is the very ideal of a professional's without conventionalism."

It was some time before the new comer could approach near enough to get a glimpse of the singer's features, so thick was the throng which surrounded her.

But when at last he made his way near enough to see Cora's beautiful face he actually started as much as could be indulged in by an habitué of such scenes.

"Who on earth is she, do you know, Bettune?" he said to the foreigner, who had been in a measure separated from the young vocalist by the thronging audience.

"She is some ward of the old baronet's I fancy—her name is St. Croix," said the count, in his imperfect, broken English. "Is she not charming?"

He had no reply.

The other speaker's eyes were riveted on the girl's features in utter perplexity. Could it be that there was any likeness between that elegantly dressed girl and the wandering heroine of the mountain who had appealed to the kindly aid of the Duke of Dunbar?

For it was the whilome suitor of the Lady Marian Biddulph, the benefactor of Cora St. Croix in her utmost need, who was now one of the guests of Sir Fulke, and attracted to the music room by that exquisite voice, was thus examining so curiously the vocalist's features.

"Yes, very beautiful," the duke managed to articulate at last. "And pray does she live here then? No wonder the old admiral can bring such a crowd to his receptions."

"No, I'm sure she does not!" replied the count. "I saw her come with that gentleman and that young lady." And he indicated Granville and Triassa by a glance as he spoke.

It was but scant information to the duke, as the young brother and sister were utter strangers to him.

Still their names could be ascertained, and perhaps an introduction obtained without creating so much suspicion as if he were to question the antecedents of the singular "double" of the mountain maiden. And he withdrew from the apartment in search of his host before Cora's attention had been drawn towards her dual admirer or any risk incurred of her betraying the truth of her identity.

"Sir Fulke, pray present your young nephew to

me," said the duke a short time after, when duly informed of the relationship of Cora's friends by a mutual acquaintance.

"You are very good, duke, but my young boy is no fit companion for you," said the old admiral, gruffly. "He has to make his way in the world—and his profession; it would but spoil the lad, though it's a very kind of you to wish such a thing, I'm aware."

"Not so, admiral. I'm not quite so foolish as you would make out," returned the duke, kindly. "I might perhaps serve—I promise you I will not turn your nephew's head with my own accidental fortune. There, if you won't trust me with the son at any rate you won't object to the mother being on my list of acquaintances," he added, with a pleasant smile he could wear when it suited him, albeit the general expression of his face was of languid inconstance.

Sir Falke cleared his throat with a significant "hem."

There was a dawning of the truth as he listened to this fresh request. Young men did not usually desire the acquaintance of dowagers without some special object. But whether his young niece Triana or his adopted ward was the attraction the old admiral could not decide.

Still the duke was too eligible a friend in any case to be rudely repulsed. And, after all, in the opinion of the sea-bred baronet, girls' hearts were not brittle enough to run any desperate risk; so with a grim smile he presented the young nobleman to Mrs. Digby, and watched with a cynical amusement, the excited flash of delight on his niece's face in welcoming so high born an addition to her visiting list.

CHAPTER XLII.

Oh, fair and stately maid, whose eyes
Were kindled in the upper skies
At the same torch that lighted mine,
For so I must interpret still
Thy sweet dominion o'er my will,
A sympathy divine.

The Lady Marian Biddulph had been the most distinguished debutante of the season—or rather we should say the most admired of the young ladies on their presentation. It might be that there was a charm in the proud indifference of her manner; so those who strove to win her favour. Or on the other hand the faint murmurs of some romance connected with her story and family would account for the enthusiasm that certainly was excited on her behalf.

A duel, an escape, a duke in despair, a viscount's life hazarded, a disgrace incurred for her sake, were all talked of as actual occurrences by the gossip of the beau monde, and the beauty and position of the heroine of such adventures might well add prestige to the tale.

Yet Marian was unhappy, scornful, injured. No one whom she really loved had yet been captive to her charms. Her nature was proud, yet she knew in her inmost heart that she had failed in the courage that had been displayed by an obscure foundling. She cared not for the Duke of Dunbar; she had even rejected him before his proposal had been formally made. Yet, when she could read his heart, when his rejection had been quietly ignored, and his grace had continued his visits and attentions without any visible distress or any enthusiastic protests of zeal and attachment, there had been a certain pique and annoyance in the mind of the heiress which told of the womanly pique and mortification that she had endured in her noble admirer's indifference.

To whom was this to be attributed? Whom did she blame?

Whether from instinct or knowledge, vague and senseless jealousy, or keen-sighted deductions, Lady Marian did not hesitate in her belief. It was to that dangerous unknown, that intruder on her very rights and domains, the magic conqueror-like of prejudiced domestics, noble lovers, and watchful officials that the mischief was to be laid.

Cora St. Croix had done it all. She was the very bane of her life—the clog on her happiness, the invader of her peace.

And as she thought of this, the rank, and the wealth, the power, and the homage were as nothing in her eyes so long as that obscure unknown, that humble rival to her greatness, reigned in the affections of those who still affected to do her homage. Perhaps she was exorable in her caprice—that petted child of fortune. It was hard to see that all her gifts could not procure her the free love of those she valued.

Yet she would scarcely have changed with that unfortunate but favoured one if it entailed the loss of the very wealth and rank that she now declared valueless. She sat in her luxurious morning room, that would have been deemed a splendid if modest-sized drawing-room by less favoured damsels, her drawing pencil in her hand, but idly balancing in her fingers, as she indulged impatient thoughts of the past and the future.

Where was Hugh, Duke of Dunbar, her present suitor? Why did he linger in his visit? It was time for him to offer his daily homage at her shrine, and ascertain what were her plans and pleasure for the afternoon. Yet three o'clock was chiming in her little gold timepiece, and still his grace came not. Did she dwell on the blank—had his company any charm for her?

She would have declared the contrary. She would have chafed under such a charge, but yet she shrank from being neglected, and her little foot stamped impatiently as each carriage rolled by and card after card was left at her door, and still he came not.

"Surely they have not mistaken my orders. They know I am always at home to him," she muttered, eagerly.

But as her hand was doubtfully laid on the bell to rectify such possible error another rattle of the door-knocker was heard, then steps ascended the stairs, and the "Duke of Dunbar" was announced, and entered into the room.

"Pardon me if I am somewhat later than my wont," he said, holding her hand a moment more than necessary in his, "but I have been making already a visit which I thought might interest you. I obtained last night an introduction that I hoped would lead to some important results, and even now I do not give up hope."

"In what respect?" asked Lady Marian, coldly. "Oh, in ascertaining what would settle my doubts and fears, Lady Marian. Do you not remember my remarkable adventure on the Coniston Fell?"

"I am not likely to forget it," was the cold reply.

"Exactly so. Well, I have always felt a lively and unflagging curiosity to learn the cause of that strange girl's request for such very humble aid, and what became of her in her lonely plight."

"And have you found her? Surely she would not be so mad, so unworthy," gasped the young heiress. "She dare not ignore all the mischief she has caused."

"I do not pretend to read the motives or the actions of a handsome girl like that fugitive," returned the duke, carelessly. "All I cared for was to get some idea of her identity and her fate. Last night I was at a reception at Sir Falke Wilton's—an official affair, with very little amusement to divert the guests. It was rather a feature of the evening, therefore, when some music was heard, and I went toward its direction. A splendid voice was singing as I went near, and as I pressed in the throng I saw an equally rare and lovely face, to which the voice belonged. And, to complete the attraction and romance, it was most wonderfully like the girl I met on that mountain, whom you imagined was the adopted daughter of Mr. Carow. You will imagine my astonishment."

"And delight, I am bound to suppose," put in Lady Marian, superciliously.

"And delight, as you will imagine," returned the duke, unmoved.

"Of course you obtained an introduction?" the heiress went on, bitterly.

"That is just where I failed," he returned. "I had just fulfilled my duty in escorting Lady Mountmart to the supper-table, when I perceived that my rare avis, my caged bird, had escaped, though her companions were visible."

"I wonder which is concealed," returned Lady Marian, bitterly. "guilt or shyness?"

"My dear Lady Marian, you are quite wrong, the girl did not even see me, I am quite sure of that," replied the duke. "It was more likely that she was exhausted by her exertions or that she hated to be homaged like a prima donna. However, I obtained an introduction to the lady where she was placed as Sir Falke's ward and who has a very pretty doll as a daughter. Of course, I paid my respects at once, hoping to satisfy all my doubts, when, lo! the fair Triana showed in graceful array, but the ward, the stranger whom I went to see, was carefully concealed in the innermost recesses of the house. I was not supposed even to be aware there was another member of the family; so I dared not inquire about her. I was in fact fairly baffled," he added, impatiently, "and had a visit to a doting mother and a commonplace daughter somewhat out of our own sphere for my pains."

Lady Marian gave a half-satirical smile.

"Shall I say it served you right, my dear duke?" she retorted. "It was actually visiting under false pretences, and," she added, more seriously, "surely it were wiser and kinder to me and to all for that miserable affair and that unhappy girl to be left in oblivion. I can scarcely consider it respectful in my father's friend to bring forward a principal agent in an affair that so nearly concerned his honour."

"I am very obtuse, my dear Lady Marian, and besides rather outraged at your unfattering expression," returned the young nobleman, coolly. "In the first place, you only call me your 'father's friend,' which is certainly not the way to insure my obedience to your own mandate. And next I do not

see what harm it can do for me to identify this fair damsel as the deliverer of the interesting Lord Bel-fort and the consequent shield of any scandal and vexation to your father and yourself."

Marian bit her lip.

"You are about as sincere with me, my lord, as with Mrs.—what did you say was her name?" she half-questioned.

"Digby, Sir Falke's niece," returned the duke, unobtrusively. "No, you wrong me, Lady Marian. I am fairly at a loss to see the grounds of your blame, and," he added, "pardon me if, on that score, I must decline obeying your behest."

"Then you actually defy my wishes, and have no regard for my comfort and peace?" she said, colouring high.

"I do you too much justice to imagine that either could be affected by such a trifle," he replied, calmly.

"Suppose I consider a trifle the test of your professions to me," returned Marian, striving to control her vexation under a cold and contemptuous demeanour.

"I should lament the insignificance of the circumstance that would divide us," was the calm reply.

The girl drew herself up to her most stately carriage.

"Are you serious, duke, or is all this chaffing a reply to what you choose to call an idle trifle?" she asked, proudly.

"That is for you to decide, Lady Marian. If you are but in jest I am very glad to be mystified and freely retract anything that might appear serious in my own expressions," pronounced his grace, calmly, as if he were delivering a speech at a school meeting instead of touching on the tenderest subject of the heart.

"That is, you are perfectly willing to break off any bonds that have bound us, however lightly, to each other?" she asked, coldly.

"I am certainly prepared to submit to your declared wishes, Lady Marian. I do not desire to be misunderstood and controlled, were it by a princess, though I have been willing to wait your own time for deciding on your final reply to the proposal I had the honour to make to Lord Marston for you."

"And which I never intended to accept!" she said, angrily. "No—it was always in deference to my father's request that I took the time I have done for consideration. Luckily I have no hesitation or regret on the subject, and from this time we are finally divided so far as any idea of a farther union is concerned. I have the honour to wish your grace farewell."

(To be continued.)

EDITH LYLE'S SECRET.

By the Author of "Daisy Thornton," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XLV.

JUST before leaving Godfrey had gone to Gertie's side, and, bending over her, had said a few words so low that no one heard them except the one for whom they were intended, and whose face flushed and eyes brightened as he said, in tones of love and passion:

"Good-bye, darling. I must go now, but shall come early to-morrow morning."

He was holding her hand in his, and as he ceased speaking he noticed the absence of the ring and the scratch the stone had made when it was wrenched away. Instantly a cloud passed over his face and he looked searchingly at Gertie, but she knew nothing; and then he glanced at me, who knew, but did not tell.

"Ettie, if you find anything of value about Gertie's person, or on the bed, or on the floor, keep it till I come again," he said; and then I knew he meant the ring, and was puzzled more than ever.

Should I tell him where it was? No; he would see it for himself, I decided, as he went out from the room and joined his father and the ladies at the door.

Alice's gloves were ruined, and she stood holding my waterproof around her with the bare hand on which the gem was shining. But Godfrey did not see it until he helped her into the carriage, when the large stone pressed hard against his hand, making him start as if he had been stung, or rather as if that ring on Alice's finger had riveted anew the fetters he had been so glad to loose.

How came she by it, and what did it mean? Surely not that he was hers again. A thousand times no, when he remembered the mighty love for another surging through his veins and making him so wildly happy. He was free, honourably free. Alice had made him so herself, and even his father could not gainsay that or think the Schuyler reputation for honour compromised in the least. A man could not marry a woman who would not marry him, who had told him so with angry words and biting sarcasms.

Godfrey was in high spirits, and his manner was not like that of one who had been so near to death. He could even joke with Robert and Emma, and would have rallied Alice on her forlorn and bedraggled appearance when she came to him on the shore if he had not remembered the scene which had followed that coming, when the ring of betrothal was hurled at him so fiercely. How it flashed and shone upon her hand, which, it seemed to him, was continually thrust upon his sight, now on the table, now on the back of the chair, now on the mantel—everywhere he turned his eyes there was the restless hand and the diamond sparkling on it, and seeming to say to him that his freedom was not so sure.

At last, when he could bear the sight no longer, he sauntered away to his father's business room, where he sat down alone to think of Gertie and wonder if it would be greatly out of place for him to go and inquire for her that night instead of waiting till morning.

And while he sat thinking there was a knock upon the door, and Alice came in shyly, timidly, with a grieved look in her face and tears in her eyes, as she said:

"Have you nothing to say to me, Godfrey? You have scarcely spoken to me since the accident, and I feel so miserable."

"What shall I say to you, Allie?" Godfrey asked, not unkindly; and then Alice's tears fell in torrents as she burst out, impetuously:

"Oh, Godfrey, say you do not mind what I said to you on the river bank. I was angry, jealous, furious, because you put me away to save another and kissed her before my eyes and called her your darling. I think I must have been crazed to say what I did and throw my engagement ring away. But I have it again. I took it from her hand and put it back on mine. See, it is here; look, Godfrey, and tell me it is just as it was with us."

To say that Godfrey was unmoved by this appeal would be wrong, for though he had never loved Alice and was glad to be free from her he did not dislike her, and would have gladly spared her pain could she have done so without compromising himself again, but he could not, he must be frank with her now and settle her relations to each other at once and for ever, and he said to her:

"But, Allie, it is not with us as it was, and it never can be again. I do not wish to hurt you unnecessarily, Allie, and I mean to be as gentle and kind as I'd want a great brute of a fellow to be with my sister under similar circumstances. Allie, I have never supposed that you imagined our engagement to be one of love. We liked each other, and were taught to think it was the proper thing for us to marry. I did not love you very much, and you did not love me—"

"But, Godfrey, I did, or I do. I can now," Alice sobbed; and Godfrey replied:

"Not as you will love some one else by and by; while I—Allie, I believe I have loved Gertie Westbrook since she was a child, but I did not know it until I was engaged to you, and met her here a woman. Then it came upon me what I had lost, and for a time I was miserable. But I meant to keep my word to you, and should have done so if you had not yourself set me free. I do not ask if you knew what you were saying. I accept the fact, and cannot go back from it. It was not a manly act to thrust you aside in the water, but I did not know what I was doing, for Gertie was drowning and calling on me to save her, and I had no thought of anything else. I shall ask her to be my wife, and if she refuse, as she may, I shall bide my time and ask her again; have her I must; but, Allie, you and I will be friends always, just the same, and try to forget the past summer, which has not brought much happiness to either of us. I have been constantly fighting against my love for another, and you have been dissatisfied at not receiving from me all you had a right to expect. And it would grow worse, Allie, so it is better to end it now. If you like the ring, Allie, keep it, as you would a gift from your brother, and let me be a brother to you. I cannot be anything else. Will you, Allie?"

Never in her life had Alice Creighton prized Godfrey as she did when she knew she was losing him for ever, and her slight form shook with sobs, but she did not withdraw the hand he took in his, and when he said again "Shall it be so, Allie? Shall we be friends? Shall I be your brother?" she answered: "Yes, Godfrey," and hurriedly left the room.

Gertie's plunge in the river was not followed by any serious consequences, and on the morning succeeding the accident, although she was very pale and languid, she complained of nothing but weakness and soreness from the rubbings she had given her, and she came to breakfast looking like a little Quakeress in one of my sober wrappers, with only a plain linen collar around her neck and her hair gathered into a net.

But nothing could make Gertie other than pretty, and when, just after breakfast, a step was heard on the walk, I saw by the flush on her cheek that she knew whose step it was. I had never seen her more beautiful than she was then.

Godfrey had come early, and was in the best of spirits, and so tender and loving toward Gertie that I watched him wonderingly, for I did not know what had passed between him and Alice, and could not guess how his heart was beating with joy at his freedom and with hope for the future. He had brought her a bouquet of flowers and some grapes from the hot-house, and he hovered about her restlessly, and called her a little nun in that queer garb and mob cap, as he styled the net which he playfully pulled from her head, letting her hair fall over her shoulders and about her face.

"There, isn't she just like some quaint picture set in a golden frame?" he said, pushing back a stray tress from her forehead, and stepping aside to let me see and admire her too.

How Gertie's blue eyes dropped beneath his gaze, and how the hot blood coloured her cheeks, until she looked like some guilty thing cowering for shame. And Gertie did feel guilty, and as if she were usurping another's rights. She knew before who had saved her from drowning, and she knew now that what she had thought might be a dream must in part at least have been a reality—that amid the horrid blackness which was so much like death Godfrey's lips had kissed her passionately, and Godfrey's voice had called her his darling and bade her come back to life again for the sake of the love he bore her.

Yes, Godfrey had done all that, and he was doing it over again, so far as he dared, with me there in the way, and Gertie's heart beat with throbs of joy, and then was heavy as lead when she remembered Alice Creighton, and, if there were no Alice, her promise to Mr. Schuyler, which she must keep.

"I am coming to see you again after luncheon, but meanwhile I will send you some of your things, and I want you dressed in white with these in your hair," Godfrey said, taking from the bouquet a few forget-me-nots which he laid in her lap. "I am going to tell you something which may astonish you, but will nevertheless make you glad, I hope, so au revoir, ma chère."

He kissed a lock of her hair, and then when she drew back in surprise he wound his arm around my neck, and kissed me, saying:

"You see, I serve you both alike. Adieu."

He was off like the wind, and we could hear him going rapidly down the walk, his very step indicative of buoyant life and vigour and elasticity. I did not say anything to Gertie, but left her alone, while I attended to some household duties.

When I returned to her after the lapse of an hour I found her asleep on the lounge, with a troubled expression on her face and a tear on her eye-lashes. The carriage from Schuyler House was at the gate, Roland Macpherson and Emma were coming up to the door, and so I woke her and made her ready for them. Emma too was paler than usual, but there was something in the expression of her face which made her prettier than I had ever seen her before. She was quite recovered, she said, but Julia and Alice were both in bed with the headache, and she had not seen either of them. Julia she reported was as cross as a bear, for when she had knocked at the door, asking if she could do anything, and if she might come in, she had received for answer "Go away and mind your business." So she had come away, and she was in almost as good spirits as Godfrey had been, and flitted about the room, while Robert's eyes followed her with an expression in them which set me to thinking and wondering if everything had been turned topsy-turvy by that accident in the river.

I had a lily I wished to show Robert, who was something of a florist, so I asked him to come into the garden.

"Yes, that's a good old Ettie—keep him as long as you can. I want to see Gertie alone," Emma whispered to me, and as soon as we were gone she went up to Gertie and said:

"Guess now what has happened! Robert wants me to be his wife—little, plain, insignificant me, and I thought all the while it was Julia! He said so last night, and would have told me before but for the misfortune of his birth, which he thought I might not like. He says you know about it, and so I come to you first of all. Of course I'd rather his mother had been a lady born, and I do not quite like the thought of those Lyles and Nesbites. That's the Rossiter blood in me, while the woman in me says 'I do not care, a man is a man for a' that.'"

Gertie was surprised, for she too had supposed it was Julia whom Robert preferred, but she was very glad to find herself mistaken, and heartily echoed Emma's sentiment, "A man's a man for a' that."

"But what will your father say?" she asked, and Emma replied:

"I don't know. I hope Glenthorne will outweigh the Lyles, Robert will tell him to-night. There, he is coming, and I must go. Good-bye, and come home as quick as you can. Tell Ettie, if you like."

She kissed us both, as Godfrey had done, while Robert shook hands with Gertie, who said:

"I am so glad. I supposed all the while it was Julia, or I should not have thought it could make any difference. Heaven bless you both."

Of course I was surprised at the story Gertie told me of Robert's mother, and wondered a little how the proud Mr. Schuyler would take the news; and from thinking of Abelard Lyle, who was Robert's uncle, my thoughts went after the young girl Heloise, of whom I talked to Gertie until it was nearly time for dinner, which, at our house, was served at one o'clock.

Godfrey was coming, after his luncheon, and Gertie must be dressed to meet him. Emma had brought her pretty white wrapper, which became her rather better than my plain gray one had done, and I had never seen her look better than she did when her toilet was made, and with the blue forget-me-nots in her hair she was ready for dinner and Godfrey.

We did not expect him till after his luncheon, but he surprised us by coming in upon us just as we were taking our seats at the table. He had been to the village, he said, and thought it a waste of labour to go home and then back again, and so he came directly to our house, and, helping himself to a chair, he drew up to the table beside Gertie, to whom he devoted himself with all the assiduity of an ardent and accepted lover. I think he looked upon himself in that light, and was not in the least prepared for the disappointment awaiting him.

At the foot of our garden, overlooking the river, is an old-fashioned summer-house, covered with a luxuriant grapevine, and Godfrey asked Gertie to go there with him as soon as dinner was over. His love was of the impetuous kind, which cannot wait to know the best or worst, and once alone with Gertie and free from observation, save as the bright-eyed robin, whose nest was among the vines, looked curiously down upon him, he burst out passionately and told her of the love which had been growing in his heart since the day he found her on the dock and stole the kiss from her.

"I have been so hungry for another," he said, "and I had it too yesterday, when you lay by the water's edge, and I feared you were dead. Forgive me, darling, if I took unfair advantage of your position. I could not help it, and had you died I would have claimed you as mine and told my love to all the world."

"Oh, Godfrey, Godfrey, hush; you must not speak to me like this. Remember Alice, your promised wife," Gertie said, gaspingly, and Godfrey replied:

"I do remember her, and it is of her I must first tell you. When in my agony, lest you were dead, I called you my darling and kissed you, Alice stood beside me a witness to the love which never was hers. She was angry, indignant, as she naturally would be, and in her anger made me free from my engagement, and said she hated me and gave me back the ring of betrothal. After that she surely has no claim on me, and if she had I could not respect it now."

Then very rapidly he went over with the entire story of his affair d'coeur with Alice from the time they both were children and the marriage was arranged by their parents.

"I like Alice as a friend," he said, "but I never could have loved her as a wife, and shall not try. I have tasted a little the sweets of loving you, and nothing will satisfy me now but the full fruition of that love. Gertie, you do love me; tell me that you do; speak to me and not shrink away from me as you are trying to do."

He wound his arm around her, and drew her close to him while with a shudder she cried:

"Oh, Godfrey, don't ask me; take the words back, please, and do not torture me so cruelly. I cannot be your wife. I cannot. It must never be—never. I have given my solemn promise and I must keep it."

Then he released her, and, springing to his feet, exclaimed:

"Your promise, Gertie! Your promise! What do you mean? Has any other man dared talk to you of love? Has Tom Barton—?"

She saw that he misunderstood her, and said to him:

"No, Godfrey, it is not that. I have not promised in that way, but for gratitude, for honour. Your father asked it of me."

"My father? What do you mean?" Godfrey said, resuming his seat beside her, and growing very indignant and very white about the lips when Gertie told him what she meant, and that she must not break her vow.

Nothing he could say moved her in the least. She had promised and should keep her word, and he must go back to Alice, who surely would forgive him. "I shall never go back to her. We settled that last night," he said, and then added, quickly: "Gertie, I am not one who gives up easily, and I shall not give you up. My father himself shall remove the bar; only tell me, Gertie, truly, do you love me, and if it were not for the promise would you be my wife?"

Oh, what a depth of love and tenderness there was in the streaming eyes lifted to Godfrey's face as Gertie answered him, so sadly:

"I am afraid I would."

"Then you shall be," Godfrey said. "I will see my father this very night and tell him the whole story, and get him to remove the interdiction, and when I have his consent I shall come straight here to you. Don't go home to-day, Gertie. Stay with Etie another night, and wait here for me till the moon is up, and then if I do not come you may know father has gadded me to such lengths that in my desperation I have thrown myself into the river!"

He spoke lightly, and tried to laugh, but there was a load on his heart, a feeling that the interview with his father might be a stormy one, but he was ready to encounter any difficulty for Gertie's sake, and esteemed no trial too great if in the end it brought her to him. It was useless, he knew, to think of winning her so long as that promise to his father stood in the way, and so that was the barrier to be broken down, and in his passion and blindness he had little fear that he should fail. Gertie was the same as his, and he told her so, and stooped to kiss her at parting. But she drew back from him, and said:

"No, Godfrey, no; not now. I am not your promised wife, and never shall be. Your father will not consent."

She knew Mr. Schuyler better than Godfrey did, and her heart was very heavy as she watched him going from her, his face beaming with hope, and his last words to her were:

"Wait for me here, Gertie, when the moon comes over the hills."

I saw that something had agitated my darling when she came back to me, and, laying her head on my shoulder, said:

"Tell me about it, if you like."

Then she told me all, and how decided she was to keep her promise, and how hopeless it was for Godfrey to think his father would consent to his marriage with a poor girl like her. And though I felt that she spoke truly I tried to encourage her, telling her that Godfrey was not one to stop at any obstacle which could be surmounted.

Later in the day Edith drove round in her phaeton to take Gertie home, but I begged to keep her another night, while Gertie too expressed a desire to stay, and so Edith went back without her, never dreaming of the reason which Gertie had for staying with me that night.

CHAPTER XLVI.

FROM the moment Robert bore Emma in his arms to the shore, and kissed her, as he set her safe upon the land, he knew he stood committed, and that silence was no longer possible. And so he made his confession to her and told her of his love, and asked if, knowing what she did, she would be his wife and the mistress of Glenhorpe.

Had he been poor, with no Glenhorpe in prospect, Emma might have hesitated, for in her way she was very proud, and good blood was her weakness, but Robert was not poor, and she was very much in love with him, and said she would be his if her father were willing, and she thought he would be, for he had never expected as much for her as he did for Julia, whose beauty ought to command a brilliant match.

Robert was not one to delay any duty long, especially if it was a disagreeable one, and while Godfrey was breathing words of passionate love into Gertie's ear he was closeted with Mr. Schuyler and with Edith too. He had asked her to be present from a feeling that he should find in her a powerful ally. But he had no conception of the real nature of her feelings when he told who he was, and said:

"The man you buried in your grounds, and who saved Godfrey's life, was my own uncle, the brother of my mother."

He stopped there a moment, waiting for the first shock to pass away, and Edith felt the iron fingers touch her throat slightly, while she was conscious of an impulse to grasp the young man's hand and claim him for her own kindred. But such confession on her part must not be made now. It was too late for that, and she did not speak, but listened breathlessly while the young man confessed next his love for Mr. Schuyler's daughter, and asked if he might have her.

Mr. Schuyler thought of that cottage in Alnwick,

of Jennie Nesbit's bare arms, and the rapid passage of the fine comb through the black hair, and all his family pride rose within him as he said, without a moment's hesitancy:

"I am surprised that after the fraud practised upon us so long you should presume to ask for my daughter, especially when you consider the difference between our families. No, I cannot give her to you."

This was his reply, while Edith, who thought only of the sweet-faced, white-haired old lady knitting in the sunshine, and of the boy-lover coming to her through the twilight in the years ago, rose, and, going to her husband's side, said to him:

"Yes, Howard, you will give her to him and forgive him for the foolish pride which has so long kept him silent with regard to his mother's family."

Mr. Schuyler was disturbed, and answered, a little impatiently:

"It's the family I object to as well as the deception."

"Yes, I know," and Edith's white fingers threaded his hair caressingly. "I can imagine that; but, Howard, consider the difference between Robert and those whom we saw in Alnwick, and remember there is nobility from within which should level all outward distinctions. You chose me without money, family or name, and Robert has all these. The Macphersons are among the first in Scotland, and you surely will not condemn him for the accident of his mother's birth. You can afford to be generous. Let me go for Emma now, and see you make her happy by giving her to the man she loves."

She had caressed him all the time, and her caresses did quite as much toward mollifying him as her arguments. She saw the wavering of his purpose in his eyes and as he did not forbid her she went at once for Emma, whom she led into the room, and whose hand she placed in Robert's, as she said:

"Now, husband, give them your blessing, and say that you are willing."

"I cannot say I am willing," he answered, in a husky voice; "but we sometimes assent to what we do not like, and if Emma wants this young man, and thinks she can be happy with him away from all her family, I will not oppose her—only let everything be done very quietly and unostentatiously. I could not endure a parade."

And thus he gave his consent, which hurt almost as much as it pleased, though Emma put her arms around his neck and thanked him for having made her so happy; but Robert, who was smarting from the reflections upon his mother's family, merely bowed his thanks, and, with a manner as lofty and haughty as that of any Schuyler, left the room.

Emma soon joined him, and with her he forgot in part the little sting, and thought only of the future, when she would be his wife and the mistress of Glenhorpe, a place grander than Schuyler House, with a long line of noble ancestry and a coat-of-arms to give importance to it.

The dinner at Schuyler Hill that day was a rather dull affair compared with what the dinners usually were, for the two demoiselles, Alice and Julia, still kept their rooms with the headache, while, immediately after his interview with Robert, Mr. Schuyler had gone up the river a few miles on some business, which he told Edith might detain him past the dinner hour, and if so she was not to wait. As he did not return they sat down without him, Edith and Godfrey, Robert and Emma, and each too much occupied with his own thoughts to be very talkative.

Godfrey was the most sociable of the four. He had heard Robert's story from Robert himself, and, while expressing his surprise, had endorsed him heartily, and teasingly congratulated Emma for having done so much better than he ever thought she could do with her milk-and-water face.

It was anything but milk and water now, and, with the blushes burning so constantly on her cheeks, and the new light in her eyes, she was very pretty to look at, as she sat at the dinner table, and Godfrey told her so, and said it was a pity she had not been engaged before, it was so great an improvement to her, and all the time he joked and laughed he was thinking of the interview with his father, which he must have that night, and wondering when he would be home.

Six, seven, eight, and nine, and still he had not come, and the moon would be up at ten, and Gertie waiting for him, and Godfrey paced up and down the long piazza, restless as a newly caged lion, and knowing nothing of the girl watching him so anxiously from her window and resolving more than once to speak to him and join him in his walk.

At last the sound of horse's feet were heard, and his father came galloping up to the side door, where Godfrey met him before he had time to dismount.

"Fare thee well," he said, "I have waited for you more than three hours. I must speak with you at once. Come in here, please."

And he led the way to the same room where Robert had declared his love for Emma, and where Gertie had given her solemn promise not to listen to Godfrey without his father's consent.

And Godfrey was there now to ask that consent—ay, to demand it, if necessary—and he plunged at once into the matter, and told his story so rapidly and emphatically that his father had no chance to utter a syllable, even had he wished to do so, but sat motionless and confounded while Godfrey poured out his burning words, and declaring his love for Gertie asked that his father should remove the ban and make Gertie free to be his wife.

Godfrey could not have chosen a more inopportune time for the success of his suit. His father had borne a great deal that day. His pride had been sorely wounded in giving his daughter to a son of the Lyles, and now came Godfrey, telling him of his broken engagement with Alice, and asking his consent to a marriage with Gertie Westbrook, a girl who, for aught he knew, was connected with a lower family even than the Lyles, and who at least had no money to bring him.

This really was the sorest point with Mr. Schuyler. His business that afternoon had been with the agent of a firm which owed him a large sum of money, and which had declared its inability to pay, so that he had returned a poorer man by ten thousand pounds than he had supposed himself to be. And this was from the portion he had set apart for Godfrey.

Just after the birth of little Arthur he had made his will, dividing his property about equally, as he thought, between his wife and children, and designating the particular investments either in land or money each should have. Strangely enough all the losses he had met with since had been from Godfrey's share. For this, however, he had consoled himself with the fact that Alice Creighton's fortune would make amends for all, and now he was told that Alice was set aside and his son would wed with poverty. No wonder, then, that he was confounded and indignant, and utterly refused to give his consent or release Gertie from her promise.

"Tell her from me," he said, "that I will hold her to it as long as I live, and she must beware how she breaks her word pledged solemnly as hers was."

And that was all the satisfaction Godfrey got. His father would not listen to his love for Gertie, and insisted upon his returning to his allegiance to Alice, whose readiness to receive him back Godfrey had inadvertently admitted. To this last proposition Godfrey said:

"Never, while I have my senses. I do not dislike Alice as a friend, but I shall never make her my wife. It is Gertie or nobody."

So the interview, which had lasted a long time, ended, and just as the clock was striking half-past ten a white-faced young man, with lips firmly compressed, and a look of determination in his eyes, went rapidly down the avenue, leaving behind a whiter-faced man, who had said to him:

"If Gertie break her word and marry you, remember it will be disinheritorance."

Now to one as madly in love as Godfrey was disinheritorance did not seem so very dreadful. It was not half as bad as losing Gertie, and as he walked away from the house he thought how pleasant it would be to work for Gertie—work hard too, and denying himself, if need be, that she might live in comfort.

There was his cottage; disinheritorance could not take that from him, for it was his own, and he had the deeds. They could live there for awhile on almost nothing, he and Gertie, and by-and-by he would be earning some at his profession as a lawyer, and they should get along somehow.

It was the same old story, always new, of young people with more love in their hearts than money in their purses. "They would get along somehow," and Godfrey's spirits were very light, and his cheery whistle sounded through the still night air as he drew near the summer-house, where Gertie was to wait for him.

(To be continued.)

HALLOW'E'N.—The old Scottish festival of Hallow'e'en, the ancient observance of which has gradually been falling into neglect in Scotland, especially in the Lowland part of the country, has of late years been revived on Deeside with all its peculiar characteristics by Her Majesty the Queen, and this year unusual preparations were made at Balmoral Castle to celebrate the occasion. Shortly before six o'clock in the evening the cottagers, gillies, and retainers on the eastern part of the Balmoral estate mustered some distance to the east end of the castle, and, four abreast, each man carrying a torch, in this form they proceeded up the western avenue, and at a point nearly opposite an old limestone quarry they met Her Majesty, who, seated in her carriage, was escorted by the tenantry on the western part of her domains,

also carrying torchlights. The two bodies here joined, and all marched in the direction of the Castle, headed by the Queen's pipers playing appropriate pibrochs. On arriving at the main entrance to the Castle Her Majesty alighted from her carriage, and, preceded by the pipers and followed by the large body of torchbearing tenantry, walked on foot by the west side of the Castle. As the procession descended the broad staircase on to the lawn at the north-west corner of the Castle the sight presented was very fine. The blazing torches throw a lurid glare on the white walls of the Castle, and the wild hurrahs of the men, blended with the "skirl" of the pipes, formed a scene of stirring and romantic grandeur, the only drawback to the sublimity of the effect being that the bright rays of the moon somewhat eclipsed the brilliancy of the lights borne by the torch-bearers. Having completed a circuit of the Castle, the procession again halted in front of the principal doorway, where dancing was vigorously begun to the strains of the bagpipes, by the light of a bonfire. Reels and strathspeys followed each other in quick succession, Her Majesty remaining a lively and interested spectator until a late hour in the night. A huge bonfire blazed all night on the Locknagar Distillery Farm, and lighted up the country for miles around. Smaller bonfires shone for briefer periods from the heights of Craig-na-ban and Craignortie, and up till midnight the lights of monster torches were seen glancing here and there on the road opposite Balmoral Castle, on the north side of the Dee.

SCIENCE.

It is said that the telegraph wires in Germany are no longer to be affixed to poles, but are to be laid in underground tubes.

An underground railway has been constructed in the city of Constantinople, and the contractors are now finishing up the terminus. It will soon be open for traffic.

The telegraph is making rapid strides in South America. Valparaiso, Santiago di Chili, Buenos Ayres, Montevideo, Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, and Pernambuco, will be linked together by wires.

There is said to be enough iron ore in the neighbourhood of the Black River Falls, Minnesota, to supply the whole demand of the United States for the next ten centuries. The State geologist is authority for the statement.

The Turkish Government have given M. Krupp an order for 500 cannon for their artillery and forts. The execution of this order will cost about 19,000,000fr. (say 800,000*l.*), and it is expected to take about four years.

It is stated that about 7,000 acres are cleared of timber each week-day in the United States. Of the annual crop 75,000,000 dollars' worth goes to fuel, and twice as much to fencing. The locomotives in North America consume no less than 700,000 cords, or 500 acres a year.

THE ATLANTIC STEAMERS.—The Cunard fleet is to be considerably increased in number, so that four vessels per week may leave Liverpool instead of two; and this arrangement is only a stepping-stone to a daily service of Cunard liners. So high do these vessels stand in public estimation that it is thought little difficulty will be experienced in finding cargo and a full complement of passengers for each vessel.

PROPOSED SUBMARINE RAILWAY.—Mr. Scott, the engineer, who has been five years elaborating a plan for making a submarine railway to run through a tunnel constructed between Ireland and Scotland, has at last propounded his scheme. Mr. Scott proposes to construct his tunnel from Cushendun or Cushendall to the Mull of Cantyre in Argyshire, about a third of the distance from Dover to Calais.

NEGATIVE VARNISH.—One quart methylated spirits, 4 oz. orange shellac, 1 oz. gum sandarac, 1 oz. gum copal. Put spirits in a bottle, powder the gums, and put in, set on oven or in hot-water-bath for two or three days, shaking well occasionally; then allow it to settle, decant the top into a clean bottle and filter the rest. This varnish is much better than that bought at shops, and is much better for keeping.

ANOTHER TEXTILE PLANT.—The plant known in North America as the wood nettle was discovered some years since on the Alleghany Mountains, at an altitude of more than 5,000 feet above the sea level. Some living specimens which Mr. Roxel, the discoverer, took home were disposed of to the Prussian Minister of Agriculture, who was desirous of ascertaining the value of the plant under cultivation. The results so far appear to be favourable, and the *Laportea pustulata*, as a textile plant, is now occupying much attention in Germany. Being a perennial, the *Laportea* does not require to be sown every year, and in this respect has some advantage over hemp and flax; besides which, it is said to be far less troublesome, and less expensive than hemp in the prepara-

tion of its fibres. In the wild state it grows from two to three feet high, but as grown in Berlin it has already reached a higher stature, which it is probable will be still more extended by careful cultivation in suitable soil. The experiments which have been made as yet, to a limited extent only, as to the quality of the fibres, tend to the conclusion that it will form a valuable addition to our textile materials.

INTERESTING BALLOON ASCENT.—A balloon ascent was recently made from the gas-works of La Villette, in Paris, by M. Tissandier. He has given the French Academy a short account of it. On leaving the ground (about mid-day), a lower atmospheric current carried them in the E.S.E. direction, but when they reached a height of 700 metres, they found a S.W. current which carried them to the N.E. The former had a velocity of 6 or 7 kilometres per hour; the latter 35 kilometres. The maximum height reached was 2,600 metres. The shadow of the balloon on the ground was perceived throughout. At 1.35 p.m., and at a height of 700 metres, this shadow, projected on a meadow, seemed encircled with a very bright aureole of yellow colour of which M. Tissandier gives a sketch.

STRENGTH-GIVING FOOD FOR HORSES.—M. Sanson has been investigating the relations between the food given to draught horses and the amount of power produced—that is to say, the strength-giving value of the nitrogenous elements of food. By a series of scientific calculations, tested in the stables of the Omnibus Company of Paris, he finds that the rations in practice given to the horses are in conformity with science and the views of the company—to feed the animals so that while they will not run into flesh they will lose nothing in strength. The mean average weight of an omnibus horse is 1,800 pounds; he is employed four hours daily, drawing a weight of two and three-quarter tons, at a rate of two and a half yards a second. Each horse's daily rations consist of nine pounds of hay, twenty pounds of oats, and one and a-quarter pounds of bran.

ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.—The following rules have been issued by Her Majesty's Commissioners for the preparation of diagrams of ancient and modern buildings of all countries in Division II., Class 9 (civil engineering), architectural and building contrivances, of the Exhibition of 1874.—1. The diagrams should be of a bold scenic character. 2. They should be executed on canvas, and may be in oil colour or distemper. 3. They may be executed in colours or in monochrome. 4. They should be perspective views. 5. Each diagram should be at least 6 feet by 10 feet, but single diagrams ought not to occupy more than 10 feet in height and 20 feet in length. 6. Each diagram should be attached to a roller, and sent rolled. 7. The scale should be clearly marked upon each diagram. 8. Her Majesty's Commissioners would be glad to have the right of purchasing the diagrams, if for sale, at the prices attached to them.

NEW FIRE ENGINE.—A new fire engine, the invention of Mr. Thomas Atkins, civil engineer, recently underwent an experimental trial in a field at Ladywell. The principle consists in saturating the water thrown on the flame with a gaseous compound, consisting of 18 parts of carbonic acid, 14 carbonic oxide, and 80 of nitrogen, manufactured from charcoal, which possesses the important advantage of very slowly effervescing, although introduced at a high pressure. Its cheapness is another advantage, the cost not exceeding 1s. for 1,700 square feet. The working standard is 150lbs. to the inch, but it can be stored at 1,000. The experiment at Ladywell was reported as fairly successful. A pile of forgotten brushwood and shavings, well saturated with tar, and about twelve feet in length, was set fire to, and it speedily burst into a furious blaze. Mr. Atkins then attacked it with his hose, and in a few minutes completely extinguished the flames, with the expenditure of about 17 gallons of fluid. One of the great merits claimed for this invention is the complete destruction of the asphyxiating qualities of smoke, which, it is said, is rendered capable of being breathed without inconvenience.

MANUFACTURE OF 38-TON GUNS AT THE ROYAL ARSENAL.—The manufacture of the seventeen hundred service "Woolwich Infants," or 38-ton guns, which were ordered from the royal gun factories some months ago, is progressing rapidly at the Arsenal, Woolwich. Several enormous series of coils, weighing each some 22 tons, and which are intended for these guns, have been lately removed from the reverberatory furnaces in the coiling shed, and lie outside ready for welding. The tubes of cast steel, three feet longer than any hitherto manufactured, have been received from Messrs. Firth and Co., Sheffield, and will shortly be turned to receive the superincumbent coils. The appearance of these new guns when completed will be an immense improvement upon that of the present naval 35-ton gun. The addition of three feet to the chase, making it in

all 19 feet from breech to muzzle, takes away from the stumpy, unwieldy look of the original weapon. But the improvement is not only in appearance. It is an established fact that a calibre of 12 inches with pebble powder requires a greater length of bore than 18 feet—the length given to the "infant"—for the expansion of the powder gases, when such enormous charges as 110lb. and 120lb. or 130lb. of powder are employed. And the new gun meets this requirement exactly, for the elongation of the powder gas waves is fully provided for by the excess of three feet given to the bore. Experiments with the 10-inch rifled gun show that the entire force of these waves is not exerted until the projectile has started several feet; hence it is necessary, in order to obtain the full effect of the powder, to give a considerable length of bore, and with every increase made in the charge of powder to increase correspondingly that length. It is anticipated that no more of the earlier pattern of 35-ton gun will be constructed.

COLOURED STARS.—Coloured stars are made by driving the coloured composition, slightly moistened, into small cases resembling pill boxes, but open at both ends. If the star is to consist of one colour only a piece of quick match is inserted between the inside of the case and the composition, and allowed to project half an inch beyond each end of it; this will insure its ignition equally at both ends. If the stars are to consist of more than one colour the cases are left open at one end only. The composition is thereby prevented from burning at more than one of its surfaces at a time. The pill-box cases are then half filled with one composition, and the remaining half with another. The fluid for moistening the composition is a mixture of shellac and methylated spirit of wine, of about the thickness of varnish used by photographers. The compositions of coloured stars are as follows:—Crimson Stars: Chlorate of potash, 24 parts; nitrate of strontia, 32 parts; calomel, 12 parts; sulphur, 6 parts; sulphide of copper, 2 parts; fine charcoal, 2 parts. Blue Stars: Chlorate of potash, 8 parts; sulphide of copper, 6 parts; Chertier's copper, 5 parts; sulphur, 4 parts. Green Stars: Chlorate of potash, 20 parts; nitrate of baryta, 40 parts; calomel, 10 parts; sulphur, 8 parts; shellac, 3 parts; fine charcoal, 1 part; sulphide of copper, 1 part. The sulphur used in all these compositions must be as free as possible from acid; otherwise it is dangerous when mixed with chlorate of potash, as it forms a detonating compound which will explode with friction or percussion. To provide against such an effect wash the sulphur in a solution of common potash in water; the acid will then be neutralized. The composition for the blue stars must not be moistened with the solution of shellac, but with fresh gum water. The various ingredients must be dry, fine, and thoroughly incorporated.

CURIOSITIES OF AEROSTATION.—Mr. Wells, the American aeronaut, has written a letter upon ballooning, in which he says of himself and for himself:—"I have made several hundred aerial voyages, some of which I consider were far more dangerous than crossing the big pond, or circumnavigating the globe with an aerial machine. My voyage from Rome to Benevento over the Apennines, with a Montgolfier, without gas, fire, net, valve, anchor, or ballast, I can prove to any scientific person to have been much more perilous than to make a voyage around the world with a balloon made especially for the trip, with life-car and boats beneath it. I have certificates from the English and American consuls of Rome that I remained in the air seven hours, making a voyage of nearly two hundred miles, with nothing more than the heat of the sun to keep the air rarefied in the great balloon Coliseum, in which I made the longest, most perilous, and extraordinary aerial voyage ever made with a hot-air machine. Having made more than a hundred ascents with Montgolfiers, I believe it possible to keep them aloft for days and even weeks, in the summer, by the heat of the sun, and a good supply of fuel to keep up the heat during the night. I have thought of using powerful sun-glasses in the top of the balloon, to assist in keeping the air warm within. I am desirous of making more trials, with rarefied air machines, and believe they could be very useful in time of war when gas cannot be so easily obtained as fire on the battle-field. I should be happy to go with an exploring expedition towards the North or South Pole, and use the fire balloon for making observations. Should another expedition start next year for the North, I offer my services to use a fire or gas machine to take part in making scientific observations from one to two miles in height, while the balloon is made fast to the ship, or to make free ascents to the height of five miles if required."

NEW POSSIBILITIES.

It is stated that some of the most interesting discoveries made this summer by Dr. Hayden's exploring party are due to the labours of Professor Cope in palaeontological researches among the Bad Lands

of Colorado. The remains are even more interesting than in the similar regions of Wyoming. They have been found to be a vast graveyard of animals belonging to a long past period of the earth's existence.

Up to the present time Professor Cope has proved the existence of more than 100 species, represented by thousands of individuals. Of these, at least 70 are new to science. They range from the size of the mole to nearly that of the elephant. Sixteen species are reptiles. Many forms of insectivorous animals, related to the mole and of very small size, have been procured. The delicacy and minuteness of these fossils are surprising. Gnawing animals, or rodents, left numerous remains of 18 species, some no larger than the domestic mouse. Some were the predecessors of the rabbits, some of the squirrels, and some of the mice.

Of the cloven-hoofed quadrupeds a great many have been found. Some were nearly intermediate in structure between the deer and the hog. Like the latter, they had no horns. They were about as large as sheep. Others were about the size of gray squirrels, being the smallest of this class of animals ever discovered. Several species of horses were living during the same period, as is proved by the bones and teeth which have been obtained. Their relatives the rhinoceroses abounded. In Colorado in former days, no less than seven species having been procured by Professor Cope. One of the specimens is a perfect skull, with teeth complete and covered with the moss-like crystallization seen in the moss-agate.

But the most remarkable monsters of the past whose existence has been disclosed by this summer's survey are a series of horned species related to the rhinoceros, but possessing some features in which, according to Professor Cope, they resembled the elephant. They stood high on the legs and had short feet, but possessed osseous horns in pairs on different parts of the head. One of the largest species had a large horn over each eye, while one had another on each side of the nose more than a foot in length. A third one, of a larger size than the last, had rudimentary horns on the nose. Still another was as large as the elephant. Its cheek-bones were enormously expanded, and its horns were flat. A fifth species had triangular horns turned outwards. Their structure is regarded as disposing of the statement of a recent writer that the presence of horns in pairs is an indication of relationship to the ruminating animals, for these beasts are near the rhinoceros. Carnivorous species were not rare in this ancient family, and served, as now, to check the too rapid increase.

Of the 14 species known there were tiger-cats, dogs, hyenodons, and the tomocots, a new genus found by Professor Cope. It resembled the dog, and was as large as the black bear, but it was much more carnivorous in its propensities. The reptiles embrace turtles, lizards, and snakes. The last two orders were discovered for the first time in this formation in America.

In the last few years Professor Cope has obtained from the ancient sea and lake deposits of Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, etc., about 300 species of vertebrate animals, of which he has made known to science for the first time more than 200.

CASTING AN EIGHTY-TON ANVIL.

M. A. LEDERBUR, mining engineer of Oraditz, in Saxony, has communicated the following method adopted for the casting of an eighty-ton anvil for a company established at Reisa for the manufacture of tin-plate. The time allowed and other circumstances shut out the ordinary mode of proceeding in such cases, and special means had to be resorted to, which are thus described by M. Lederbur:

The quantitative yield of a furnace is in direct proportion to the horizontal section of the zone of fusion and the draught of air within it, which must not be confounded with the tension produced by tuyeres in furnaces of the old form. In two furnaces of different diameters, with the same tension, the quantity of wind depends directly on the section of the furnace. But the quantity of iron melted in a given time depends on the amount of fuel consumed in that time, supposing the heat developed to be profitably employed.

If a blower is used to produce the draught, its effect, as is well known, increases with the diminution of tension of the air, and consequently its effect may cease entirely when the tension passes a certain limit. If great draught is required in order to produce rapid fusion it is better to employ furnaces of large section with low-pressure blowers. Add to this, as in the case in question, it is necessary to make use of new blowers of which the effect is not ascertained, only a small number of furnaces can be used without running the risk of interruption in the fusion. In such cases the only means to be adopted in order to produce a large casting is an apparatus with a large sectional area.

The round form generally given to melting furnaces presents the advantage of a minimum periphery with maximum section, and consequently the smallest loss of heat by exterior radiation. But the circular section has this defect, that if the diameter be much enlarged the blast which arrives from the periphery has great difficulty to reach the centre, and a pressure increasing in ratio of the diameter is required to complete the effect. With large diameter and feeble pressure the zone of fusion is limited by a circle, so that one space in the area of the furnace and all round a space which is not affected, or but incompletely affected by the blast, and consequently where there is neither combustion nor fusion, so that the iron which descends into the interior of that zone is brought into contact with that which is already fluid and causes the latter to lose a notable portion of its heat.

The above considerations caused M. Lederbur to adopt as a fundamental form for his furnace a parallelogram with rounded angles, resembling the blast-furnace known as Rachette's. The length adopted was 250m., and the width 0.70m.; the blast entered at the long sides of the furnace through two series of tuyeres placed horizontally one above the other at a distance 0.90m., the lower row being formed of three tuyeres of 0.20m. diameter and the upper by six tuyeres of 0.10m. diameter. The section of all the lower tuyeres was therefore 1.884 square centimetres, and that of the upper series 0.44. The arrangement of these tuyeres was such that the axes of those on one side of the furnace in no case coincided with those of the opposite side.

The molten iron was got out as in the cupola of Kruger, by the use of what is known as an advance-creset, capable of containing 15 tons of iron. The height of the furnace without the hearth was 4.10m. from sole to mouth; the thickness of the sides was 0.30m.; and the casing was formed of fire-bricks bound with old rails united at the narrow ends of the furnace by means of crosspieces. A special casing of cast or plate iron was not found to be necessary for the furnace, but the hearth was surrounded with iron plate; the blast channel was formed of bricks near the blower, and of cast-iron troughs bolted down on cast-iron plates at the furnace end.

The charge of the furnace was 75 kilogrammes of coke and 1,050 kilogrammes of pig, and the result was very fluid and fit for casting, and, although the pressure obtainable was only that of 12 to 15 millimetres of water, the furnace produced seven tons of fluid iron per hour.

TO-DAY AND YESTERDAY.

TO-DAY stern realities meet us. Yesterday the future loomed up before us with bright visions of happiness, golden dreams tinted with the rainbow of promise. To-day those dreams have vanished, those "air-castles" have fallen to the ground, and our buoyant hopes lie buried with the hidden memories of the past.

Yesterday the skies were fair and bright, not a cloud dimmed our vision, but through the dim vista of futurity we beheld before us a high and lofty career. We should be something, for the advancement of our race. High on the pinnacle of fame our names should be enrolled side by side with those of the noble and distinguished of earth. Step by step we would ascend the hill of science, and our long and toilsome march being ended, would bind our aching brows with the bright and glorious chaplet of Fame.

But to-day do we realize these cherished visions? Have we won that for which so many long and weary vigils have been kept, for which every other consideration has been set at defiance?

Early and late have we pursued the phantom, earthly fame, never flagging in our hot haste, discouragements but exciting us to greater diligence; and, alas! too late we learn that the spring-time of our life has fled in the pursuit of a shadow, a fleeting phantom, that has eluded our grasp. And to-day our hearts are oft filled with sighing and bitter disappointments; but we turn in our hour of affliction to the promises of heaven. To-day, by a rapid retrospect, we read the records of life's yesterday, and learn how varied they are, with only here and there a gleam of sunshine, but full of so much sorrow.

PLAIN SPEAKING.—Speak plainly. Tell just what you mean, without a long preface and a dozen ifs and buts. Command us to the young lady who, on being asked her age, by a young man, replied, Yes. We want no hesitation—no equivocation—when the mind is fairly made up. One word will express as much as a dissertation. We have known whole evenings to be consumed, just because a heavy, dull, pro-

lix individual travelled through forty or fifty pages, just to give his assent or dissent to a proposition. Aim at the point—reach it the nearest way you can, and then stop. You will not then tire out your audience, or throw them into a sleep.

ALEXANDRA PALACE.—It has been stated that the Alexandra Palace will be finished by June next, and if the winter be exceptionally free from frost this may, perhaps, be accomplished. The style of architecture of the building will be similar to that of its predecessor, but the appearance of the structure will be greatly changed, and its area enlarged. Instead of a central dome there will be a hall 185 feet by nearly 400 feet in dimensions. Between this and the east and west ends will be open courts containing beds of flowers and appropriate ornaments. On each side of these courts will be glazed corridors, the ends being filled up with conservatories handsomely proportioned, and surmounted with small domes of glass and iron. The new palace will have but one transept, with a wide nave. The distinguishing external feature will be four lofty towers at the corners of the building. The north side is to contain an aquarium at its eastern end; at the west will be the picture gallery.

THE MOTHER OF OUR RACE.

THE first woman was Eve, wife of the first man, mother of mankind, and queen of the newly created world. This woman was of high nobility, of royal and illustrious descent, a lady from whom all the royal lines of earth have sprung. She was a woman crowned with glory by birthright, and invested with power by the imposition of a mightier hand than any other woman could ever boast. Hers was wisdom, knowledge and genius. The intellect was clear, undimmed by folly, unsullied by sin, and not indebted to the toils of infancy and child instruction.

Eve was God's direct workmanship, the work of Him who pours intelligence into the minds of angels, and prince of angels, cherubim and seraphim. She was happiness and virtue, and abode of women tasted blessedness which sprang from a taste of spotless perfection. Her soul created in the image of a righteous and a holy being must have been the seat of human perfection, the centre of attraction to everything that made its home in Eden's beautiful bowers. The smile must have been on her lip, the bloom and dew of youth on her cheek, the sunlight of endless life on her brow, while the intellectual and moral beauty of the soul shone forth in every gesture and movement of that perfectly organized body, the last and highest material production of creative power.

The human mind can advance no farther in its conceptions of the beautiful than when it pictures to itself the character and person of the first mother as she appeared on the morning of her creation. She came to be the companion of Adam, enjoying the favour of God, the homage of animated nature, invested with authority over the other created beings. She was beautiful herself and saw beauty in everything around her. As an elect lady she drank from the cup of perfect felicity, and must have diffused joy through that Paradise over which God and the first created man had delighted to make her queen.

THE ALBERT INSTITUTE.—The opening of the Prince Consort's Memorial Building at Dundee came off recently, the Earl of Dalhousie officiating, in the presence of a large concourse of spectators. The buildings have been in course of construction for some time. A Free Library had been established in a section of the block, and the other portions were afterwards fully occupied with specimens of art and manufacture. The cost is upwards of 30,000*l.*, and the buildings will be known as the Albert Institute.

GIFTS OF THE EARL OF DUNDY.—A few days ago the Earl of Dundy added to his costly gift of a marble flooring of the nave of Worcester Cathedral by the presentation of a marble and alabaster pulpit, designed by Sir Gilbert Scott, and a number of carved oak benches. Lord Dundy's generosity has also been manifested in another most worthy direction. A movement having been set on foot for the purchase of the School of Design, so that this institution, which has for twenty-two years been doing a valuable work in this city, might meet its increased liabilities free, at least from the burden of rent, several of the wealthy citizens subscribed sums amounting to 500*l.* for that purpose. Lord Dundy, on being informed that a further sum of 1,500*l.* was needed, handsomely offered to contribute half that amount, 750*l.*, provided the remainder can be raised in the city. The citizens will doubtless manifest their appreciation of the liberality displayed by the noble earl and the estimation in which they hold the School of Design by speedily subscribing the sum needed.



[THE SCHEME CONCOCTED.]

THE LADY OF WATER LAWN.

"Who is that creature?"

Madame Vane uttered the words in a low but piercing tone, and curled her lip scornfully.

"She with Mr. Renfeld, you mean, I suppose?" lisped the fastidious Mrs. Burrington, placing her gold-rimmed glass to her eye.

"Of course."

Leonora Vane spoke spitefully this time, and glanced once more at the motley throng among whom walked the object of her sudden hate, leaning upon the arm of the handsome Mr. Renfeld. She was not in elegant attire, this golden-haired stranger; there were no diamonds at her white, graceful neck, nor on her slight, tapering fingers, but nature's brightest gem shone from her blue eyes—a pure, trusting soul—and cast its matchless radiance all around and over her.

"She assumes the airs of a queen," said Madame Vane, fairly grinding out the words from between her white, sharp teeth. "Who is she? Do you know?"

"I'm not certain, my dear Leonora," answered Mrs. Burrington. "They call her Lucille Clayton, I believe."

The last words were accompanied by a sigh as if her exertions had quite overpowered her.

Madame Vane's black eyes gleamed with jealousy, and Mrs. Burrington's features wrinkled with a smile of contempt.

The crowd swept on, and the gentleman and his fair companion were lost to view amid the eddying rush of human beings.

With a sharp order to her coachman to drive faster Madame Vane sank back upon the crimson cushions of her elegant Victoria, and gave herself up to her perturbed thoughts.

The fashionable but woefully faded Mrs. Burrington glanced at her occasionally, and smiled to herself in an exulting, treacherous way. Another's discomforture was her delight, another's joy was her misery; she loved nobody, but lived upon every body; she flattered everybody and slandered everybody, doing both with skill enough to save herself harmless: she was, in brief, a snake.

In the meantime Lucille was still escorted by her "aristocratic" companion. Both paused a moment before the door of her home; an embarrassing silence followed; then Lucille looked up, her cheeks red with mortification.

"I would ask you to come in if——"

She hesitated. Pride forbade the acknowledgment of poverty.

"If!" he repeated, with a glance of reproach. "I

know your thoughts! Why will you do yourself and me so much injustice? I care nothing for one's surroundings if, like yours, one's heart is pure and patient."

Her eyes lighted with gladness.

"Then come in."

She held the door open and glanced toward him, but dropped her gaze as she noted the fervency of his. He came forward smiling, and ran up the stairs as if he were perfectly at home. Pausing on the landing, he waited for her to come up, his bright, hazel eyes fixed upon her steadily the while. She did not look at him; somehow she could not meet his glance without colouring.

Throwing open the door of her little room, with its plain, papered walls, where her mother was sitting, engaged in binding shoes, Lucille said:

"Mother, allow me to make you acquainted with Mr. Renfeld, who is kind enough to wish to call on us."

The woman looked up quickly, her pinched features reflecting the suspicion that filled her mind. Sorrow and treachery had made her mistrustful of the whole human race.

"He's the one that got you your place, ain't he?" she demanded.

"Yes, mother."

"Well, I am very much obliged to him, I'm sure," continued Mrs. Clayton, with another sharp glance at Mr. Renfeld's diamonds and rich attire. "We are poor people, sir; we don't often have a rich caller like you."

Lucille was deeply mortified by this reception, and knew not where to look. In vain she motioned her mother to be silent, in vain she cast imploring glances toward her, the old lady was determined to have her way.

"Sit down, Mr. Renfeld," she proceeded. "I might have asked you before, but I knew you were used to better chairs than them. However it's all we've got."

"I did not come here, my dear madam, to examine your furniture," he replied, smiling kindly. "I came here to ask a favour of you—a great favour."

Lucille's eyes dilated with wonder.

"A favour of me?" repeated Mrs. Clayton, staring at him in perplexity. "How on earth can I do you a favour? You must be joking, and I'll tell you now I don't like jokes."

The gentleman bit his lip with annoyances.

"I never was more serious. I don't understand why you distrust me so."

"I didn't mean to offend you, I'm sure," Mrs. Clayton responded. "But I've lived a good while in

this world, and I've got over believing every one I see a saint. But what's the favour?"

"It is this," answered Mr. Renfeld, advancing a step with his eyes fixed yearningly upon Lucille. "I ask you, as an honourable man, to give me the hand of your daughter in marriage!"

The girl's heart gave a great bound; she sank into a chair and covered her face to conceal her blushes.

The old lady gazed upon her guest with mouth wide open.

"D-o y-o-u m-e-a-n i-t?" she queried, in amazement.

"Could I trifle thus?" he rejoined, almost indignantly. "Have you no confidence in me whatever?"

"Have you asked her?" continued this practical mother, ignoring his ples.

"No. I know not if she loves me; but I have a hope that will enable me to wait years if need be."

He placed his hand upon Lucille's golden tresses, and spoke again softly.

"Do you care for me?"

"Oh, Harry!" and then she burst out crying as it was the most dreadful thing in the world.

Mrs. Clayton said, in a milder tone:

"I'm sure I never thought of such a thing, and perhaps I've been rude to you, but you know the world, so you won't blame me for watching over my only child. Well, if you'll be good to her you may have her."

And the old lady wiped away a tear or two from her deep-set eyes.

"It seems like a dream!" sobbed Lucille, in ecstatic joy as her lover clasped her hands. "Oh, such a beautiful dream! I—I hope it won't end like one!"

"My dear!"

It was the soft voice of Mrs. Burrington, coming up from the velvety depths of an easy-chair, where this indolent woman reposed nearly half her time.

Of course she was in the drawing-room; nothing was too good for her.

She was thinking over the details of an interview she had had that morning with Mr. Roland Armistead, whom she had met while walking in the spacious grounds adjoining the mansion of her friend.

"Well, what is it?" queried Madame Vane, a little impatiently perhaps.

"I heard a little piece of news this morning when I was out," she answered, in the same affable tone, but with a desire to harass her friend.

"You are weary though, and so I'll not trouble you with it."

Leonora's dark eyes moved restlessly; she compressed her lips and waited a moment, but her companion gave no indication of speaking again.

"Was it about Mr. Renfeld?" she asked, at length.

"Yes, my dear. He is really going to marry that odious creature with the yellow hair."

"He never shall!" cried Madame Vane, leaping to her feet and clenching her small white hands.

Mrs. Burrington manifested some interest, and managed to raise herself to a sitting posture.

"Why, bless me, my dear, how grand you are when you are angry. I never saw you look so beautiful!"

Leonora headed her not, but paced the room like a caged lioness, her bosom heaving convulsively, her face pale as snow, and its muscles twitching nervously, her black eyes gleaming like diamonds! Anon as the fury of the passion increased she beat her hands together and stamped her feet vengefully.

"I tell you she shall never have him—she with her baby face and whining ways!" she ejaculated, in a hoarse voice. "He belongs to me—to me only. Oh, Heaven, am I mad that I reveal my heart thus? But you, you will not betray me, you will not despise me for loving him, will you?"

"Why, my dear friend, I am proud of you, proud of your womanly love. Do not give way to grief. He is only infatuated, he will return to you."

"Oh, do you think so?"

"If he don't be should be made to," continued Mrs. Burrington, artfully. "I was glad to hear you say that she would never have him! Men are vacillating—all of them—he must be brought back before it is too late! He is impulsive—he may—"

"Marry her at once!" interposed Leonora, wildly. "Oh, Heaven, yes, he may! Tell me, what shall I do? I cannot, will not lose him!"

"She is at his home now, on a visit to his mother. If you will be guided by me I will separate them!"

"I will! I will! Tell me what to do!"

"You know that Roland Armistead loves you!"

"Yes, but I hate him!"

"Softly, my dear! He will call this afternoon. He will offer himself to you. You must accept him."

"Accept him? You are trifling with me!"

"That is too unkind, my dear. You do not mean it though, I'm sure. Yes, accept him; you can find a pretext to dismiss him—when the time comes. After you have accepted him I will engage him to do you a service, and make him think all the time that he is benefiting himself. Now will you do as I say and trust me?"

"Oh, yes, yes, you are so good!"

Leonora thought only of her love as she uttered those words! Her mind held captive by the dread of losing the man who was dearer to her than life she could not discriminate between the good and evil just at that moment.

Immediately afterward the bell rang, and a servant entered bearing Mr. Armistead's card. Nerving herself to carry out her friend's plan, Madame Vane ordered him to be admitted. Mrs. Burrington arose and hastily left the room.

In a few moments Mr. Roland Armistead entered, and bowed low as he greeted Leonora. He was of medium height, with low brow, piercing gray eyes, and thin, crafty lips. As a whole his face was not unpleasant, but one used to studying character would have avoided him as an unprincipled man ready to take advantage of any opportunity of any kind.

In the elegant drawing-room at Water Lawn were seated Mrs. Renfeld and her son. Lucille was in her chamber.

"So you like her, mother?" Harry said, gazing wistfully into the calm blue eyes that were bent so lovingly upon him.

"She seems to be all that is good and noble, my son. I think you have made a wise choice. Having known privation, she will appreciate affluence all the more. I think she has a fund of reason that will prevent her from ever becoming frivolous."

"You make me so happy!" he exclaimed, pressing a kiss upon her brow. "I never saw a woman that attracted me as she did the very first time my eyes rested upon her! I never told you of our first meeting, did I? It was last May. About eight o'clock in the evening, while out walking, I heard a faint scream, and then words uttered pleadingly. I sprang into a run and soon came upon a man and woman, the latter trying to break his hold upon her arm. I helped her, and the fellow lay down very quietly in the gutter. Of course I escorted her home, and learned that she was oftentimes compelled to carry

her work home in the evening; I saw that she was beautiful, and felt that she was good! I talk boyishly, don't I? But I can't help it—it seems as if my youth had returned! Ah! my darling comes!"

Lucille entered just then, tastefully but plainly attired in a black silk with white lace at her throat and arms. Her face, reflecting the joy that dwelt in her heart, was tinted with a healthy carmine, and her blue eyes shone brilliantly. Her golden hair, just caught above the brow, fell over her shoulders in shining waves. Her lover gazed upon her in love and admiration!

"Mother loves you, my dearest!" he murmured, clasping her hands. "She has praised you more than I dare tell you, lest you get vain! Oh, we will be very happy."

Tears of gratitude came into the girl's eyes. She tried to speak but failed, and then bending down kissed Mrs. Renfeld with affection and reverence. The old lady stroked the sunshiny hair that fell upon her shoulder and said, at length, in a faltering voice:

"Thank Heaven for both of you! My joy seems too great to last!"

"There is a dread on her mind. What can it be?" thought Mr. Renfeld, knitting his brows. "It creeps into her words. Has she any secret from me?"

His betrothed turned toward him at that moment, and her bright, happy face drove the dark conjectures from his mind. Presently the sound of a hand organ greeted their ears, and he was about to send a servant with some change as well as an order for the fellow to leave the premises, when Lucille restrained him, and suggested that they should both go out together. He consented smilingly.

As they reached the verandah they beheld the organ man standing upon the steps, and the next instant there came in view a fairy-like child dressed in black velvet tunic, white dress and blue sash, with a wreath of flowers surmounting her golden curls. In her hand she carried a tambourine, and as she saw Lucille she said:

"Pretty lady, give me penny."

Then she started back, dropped her instrument, gazed upon Miss Clayton yearningly, and sprang towards her with arms extended.

"Oh, mamma! mamma! why did you go away from Lily?" she cried, tears starting to her eyes.

"I've been so lonely, and papa—"

"Go away, child, and behave yourself!" said Harry, tossing her a few coppers.

"Go away from my own mamma?" she exclaimed.

"Who be you? You ain't my pa! I won't go away, because my papa dressed me all up nice to come and find my mamma!"

And she covered Lucille's face with kisses.

A terrible doubt stole into his mind.

"Can't you speak to your own flesh and blood, woman?" growled the man at the door. "Perhaps 'tain't pleasant now, though, when you're about getting another husband."

"Lucille, what does this mean?"

Her lover's stern tone awoke her to a realization of the terrible dilemma in which she was placed. She looked at him—she saw mistrust in his eyes; it sent a quivering pang to her very soul, and she fainted dead away at his feet.

"Heaven, it is true!" he cried, in anguish and dismay. "Oh, where is purity? where is honour? I wish I had died before I saw her—she who has repaid my love with treachery!"

And he fled from the house as one mad.

"You are here, my love! I'm thankful to find you at home; I feared I should have to wait an hour, and that is torture, I'm not happy a moment away from you."

And Mr. Roland Armistead took Leonora's hand within his own and pressed it fondly. She frowned and drew away from him.

"Why do you repel me?" he queried, in an injured tone.

Leonora arose and walked the room a moment, her lips compressed, her eyes glowing with strong resolution.

"I may as well tell you now," she said, confronting him. "I have learned your character since our engagement, and I decline to fulfil it."

"I shall force you to."

"Sir!" she exclaimed, haughtily.

"You have entrapped yourself, my dear," he replied, insolently, as he threw himself crosswise into a chair. "I know your little game, and it won't do to rave, or threaten, or ring for the servants—not a bit of it. You hired me to do a mean job. I've done it, but you've realized no benefit from it, so you think to play the queen with me, but you won't!"

He looked up into her face and laughed.

"Leave my house, or I will call help!" she exclaimed, her eyes blazing with indignation.

"Touch that bell-rope, and I will spread the story all over England how the widow of the Honourable

Cecil Vane libelled a poor girl and nearly broke her heart besides cheating her out of a lover."

She sank into a chair trembling! Oh, how bitterly she repented having listened to the suggestion of the treacherous Mrs. Burrington! What could she do? Must she suffer humiliation at the hands of this coarse fellow in gentle garb?

"I will kill myself before I will marry you!" she said, in a husky voice.

He eyed her sharply and saw that she meant it.

"I will offer one more chance. Give me a thousand pounds and I'll let you alone for all time. Be careful what you say now, for this offer will only stand for three minutes."

He took out his watch and glanced from its dial to her face.

"I accept!" she ejaculated at the expiration of two minutes; and seating herself at an escritoire she wrote a cheque for the amount. He received it with a mocking bow, and left her.

Throwing herself on a lounge, she wept bitter tears of mortification, and reproached herself until she was perfectly miserable. But it was all a good lesson for her.

Two hours later that cheque was cashed, and Mrs. Burrington received one-half the amount, and prepared for a visit to some other scene of operation, where her son, Roland Burrington, alias Armistead, might aid her again in her confidence tricks; for the worthy lady was only an adventurer, travelling under forged credentials.

* * * * *

"If he would only come!"

Mrs. Renfeld uttered the words in a low, sad voice, and glanced in love and sympathy towards the lounge at her right, where lay a sleeping girl, her golden hair falling around her thin, pale face like a halo of light.

Months had passed—months of illness and sorrow, since Harry Renfeld left this gentle girl lying prone upon the verandah floor, stricken down only by her own sensitiveness. In delirium she had called for him, in lucid moments she had prayed for him, in her dreams she had murmured his name until it seemed to her aged nurse and protector that her heart would break too, if her son did not soon return.

"Mother!"

The blue eyes opened and looked around wistfully.

"What is it, dear? Your mother is upstairs, but I am here."

"Yes, you are his mother; but you love me, don't you? and you'll write to him and tell him to come back, won't you?" and the tears coursed down the pallid cheeks.

"Yes, darling," answered Mrs. Renfeld, a pang shooting through her heart as she reflected that she knew not where her son was.

"Mother!"

Again the word sounded upon her ear in a deep whisper.

The old lady threw up her hands in surprise and alarm, and then a flood of thankfulness swept over her being as she recognized her own boy standing in the entrance. She recognized him, and that was all; for grief had changed him, and added years to his face.

"Mother, was it true? What is she here for?"

"Oh, Harry, how could you doubt her? It was all a wicked conspiracy! This is the first trouble you ever gave me."

He shivered as with cold.

Again Lucille opened her eyes, and as she beheld her lover her breath came quick and laboured, as if in a dream, and her form quivered.

"Oh, my love—my own! Can you forgive me?"

He threw himself upon his knees before the lounge, and clasping her hand gazed imploringly upon her.

"Yes, my love—my Harry!"

Joy works wonders; and six months later the roses returned to Lucille's cheeks and she became a happy bride. J. S. B.

ACCORDING to the report of the geological survey of Newfoundland, a vein of bone stone, rivaling in texture and quality the famous oil stone of Turkey, has been discovered there. It occurs in great quantity.

PROLIFIC APRICOT TREE.—An apricot tree belonging to Mr. W. S. Portal, of Malshanger Park, Basingstoke, which is said to be seventy-five years old, has yielded over 150 dozen of fruit this year; last year it produced 200 dozen. The tree covers an area on the wall on which it grows of no less than 440 square feet. The soil of the garden is very chalky.

EXTRAORDINARY WALKING FEAT.—A young man named Poplin, who styles himself the "Champion Prize Clog Walker of the World," recently performed at Radcliffe the extraordinary feat of walking

50 miles in 10 hours. He walked in clogs weighing 3lbs., and carried 15lbs. on his back during the last five miles. He completed his task considerably within the required time.

BIRTHDAYS.—There is an old prophetic rhyme, which exists in as many languages as versions, concerning the results of being born on a certain day in the week. One reading runs thus:—

"Monday's child is fair of face,
Tuesday's child is full of grace,
Wednesday's child has toil and woe,
Thursday's child has far to go,
Friday's child is loving and giving,
Saturday's child works hard for his living,
And the child that is born on the Sabbath-day
Is happy and lucky and wise and gay."

Here are a few tests. Byron was born on a Tuesday; so was Napoleon I.; Napoleon II. (M. Rochefort's ideal Emperor) on a Wednesday; Napoleon III. also on a Wednesday; Pope Pius IX. on a Sunday; Garibaldi on a Wednesday; Bismarck on a Friday (the first of April); the unhappy Emperor Maximilian also on a Friday; his Empress on a Sunday; Mr. Gladstone on a Friday; and Mr. Disraeli on a Saturday.

FUTURE HOUSEKEEPERS

We sometimes catch ourselves wondering how many of the young ladies whom we meet with are to perform the part of housekeeper when the young men who now eye them so admiringly have persuaded them to become their wives.

We listen to those young ladies of whom we speak, and hear them not only acknowledging but boasting of their ignorance of all household duties, as if nothing would so lower them in the esteem of their friends as the confession of an inability to bake bread and pies, or cook a piece of meat, or a disposition to engage in a useful employment. Speaking from our own youthful recollections, we are free to say that taper fingers and lily-white hands are very pretty to look at with a young man's eyes, and sometimes we have known artless innocence of practical knowledge displayed by a young miss to appear rather interesting than otherwise. But we have lived long enough to learn that life is full of rugged experiences, and that most of the loving, romantic and delicate people must live on cooked or otherwise prepared food, and in homes kept clean and tidy by industrious hands. And, for all the practical purposes of married life, it is generally found that for the husband to sit and gaze at a wife's taper fingers and lily hands, or for a wife to sit and be looked at and admired, does not make the pot boil, or put the smallest piece of food in the pots.

THE LIQUOR QUESTION IN GOTHENBURG.

In Gothenburg all the public-house licences are held by a single "Retailing Company," incorporated by royal charter. Each licence representing, as with us, the right to open one public-house, the directors use in different parts of the town just so many of their licences as they deem required by the population. In the first place they take care that all houses in which liquor is sold are light, well ventilated and roomy. Into each they put a manager, on the terms that he is to take all his supplies of spirits of the company, and to pay over to them every farthing received for spirits sold, his remuneration consisting of the profits on his sales of tea and coffee, malt liquors, cigars and eatables, supplemented in most cases, by a fixed salary. Once a year the company's balance-sheet is submitted to and audited by the municipal authorities, and thereupon the entire amount of the net profits for the past twelve months is paid into the municipal treasury, and becomes part of the general revenue of the town.

All this is an embodiment and earnest striving after the realization of sundry definite conclusions about the drink traffic at which the Gothenburgers arrived eight years ago. They then made up their minds that, though they could not and would not stamp out the spirit trade they could and must regulate it; and that their way of doing so should be to limit the number of spirit shops, to ensure the purity of the spirits offered for sale, and, the most important of all, to make it nobody's interest to stimulate the consumption. And by keeping these principles steadily in view the Gothenburg Company have been, and may be hoped will continue to be, the means of diminishing substantially and permanently the sum total of drunkenness and crime amongst their fellow-townsmen.

Not that all is colour de rose here; far from it. An enterprise like that in which the Gothenburg Company is engaged is pretty sure to have its full share of difficulties and disappointments. This last year, 1872, for instance, must have been a disheartening time for the believers in the system; for some ugly and uncomfortable statistics met them at the

close of it. The number of police convictions for drunkenness, which for several years after the establishment of the company (in 1865) had steadily diminished, showed a decided tendency to increase again; the cases of delirium tremens also to have largely increased; both facts pointing unmistakably to an increase of drinking in the town.

Yes, an increase of drinking there had been, no doubt; but was the system to blame for it? It was a good occasion for the enemy to blaspheme. What easier than to say, "Here is just what might have been expected all along. New brooms sweep clean; and the company, suddenly substituting its uninterested dispensers of unadulterated liquor for the profit-seeking mob of individual publicans, and shutting up thirty per cent. of the drink shops, was a great blow to the drunkards for a time. But the dram-lovers have recovered their spirits now. They were rather frightened at first by the company's philanthropic manifestoes, the severe cleanliness of their houses, and the regulations and tariffs and what not on the walls. But, after all, the liquor was undeniably good and unimpeachably strong; and so long as one was not obviously 'overloaded' (the expressive Swedish word for 'drunk'), one might get as many drams at a company's house as at any dram shop in the unlightened old days. And it gives an extra spice and stimulus to brandy-bibbing to feel that you are doing it under the express sanction of a most respectable corporation; and what an excuse and salve for a little over-indulgence in the remembrance that every additional glass of spirits drunk will help to swell the sum of profits to be paid over by the company to the town treasury, and so indirectly lessen the burdens of the ratepayer! No wonder that you find an increase of drinking where you have a system that makes things easy and comfortable for the drunkard, and tempts people to drink who never went inside a public-house till the company made it quite a respectable thing to be seen there."

FACETIÆ.

Bow-wow.—The baby dog-fish—why not puppy-fish?—are reported to be doing well at the Brighton Aquarium. They wag their tails already, but as yet none has been heard to bark.—*Punch.*

PRECEPT AND EXAMPLE.

Teacher: "Jessie Brown, how often have I told you not to be late?"

Jessie: "Which you have, miss. But, for! I've had such a job with my 'air'!"—*Punch.*

A FEELING ANSWER.—In struggling to make a dull-brained boy understand what conscience is a teacher finally asked, "What makes you feel uncomfortable after you have done wrong?" "The big leather strap," feelingly replied the boy.

BOOK ADVERTISED.—"Who's Your Lawyer?" Evidently there can be but one answer to such an impertinent question. In these days we don't exchange cards and fight duels, but we give the addresses of our respective solicitors. "Who's your lawyer, sir?" "Who's yours?"—*Punch.*

CLOSED UP.

Newly Fledged B.A. to his late College Tutor: "I say, old fellow, ever since I matriculated I've wanted to ask you which tailor made your clothes?"

Tutor: "Humph! Fubbins in the High!"

B.A.: "Much obliged! I'll take deodid good care he never makes mine!"—*Punch.*

A TUBE!

The Colonel: "As for what they call 'intellect,' and that sort of thing, why, what I say is, the less of it in a woman the better, my boy!"

Little Tommy: "My sentiments to a T, sir! Intellect indeed! As for me, I've always looked upon woman as a mere toy!"—*Punch.*

Mr. P.: "Ah, then, I suppose we shall be all going by the 11.45?"

Railway Director: "Eh? Wha-at!!—You don't suppose, I hope, that I, and the wife, and the young 'uns, are going by rail?" (Shudders.) "Not if I know it, my dear friend!—Not while four posters and an omnibus can be had for money! I'm afraid you don't read your 'accidents'?"—*Punch.*

A LOGICAL LAD.

Charlie: "I say, ma, what relation is Clara to us?"

Mrs. Blood: "Clara? Oh, Clara is my maid, dear!"

Charlie: "Oh, because you said one ought only to kiss one's relations, and Brother Tom was kissing her like mad on the stairs just now!"—*Punch.*

A DETERMINED POACHER.—The following is a curious proof with what determined resolution a poacher perseveres in his calling. During a snow in 1804 a noted poacher was shooting at a covey of partridges in the manors of Warthen and Brocton. The gun burst and terribly shattered his left hand. On his way home he was met by a neighbour, who

observed his hand bleeding freely, and inquired the cause. The other replied, "The gun has burst and blown off two of my fingers; but never mind that, mun, I ha' got the birds."

CHEESE.—A Surrey gentleman has patented a process for making "cheese of rich quality" from skim-milk and tallow, provided the latter be not too highly flavoured. The two are beaten into an emulsion, and then treated with rennet in the usual way, and the outcrop is fine Cheshire. Skim-milk and tallow, how nice with sawdust pie by a brick-dust fire!

MALABROPHIANA.—An esteemed friend of ours and occasional contributor has been terribly alarmed by a prediction in her newspaper that Mr. Gladstone means, next Session, to interview a Bill for the division of the country into equal electrical districts. The news has given her such a shock that she says she feels as if she had been frightened by a ghost from the borough of Old Scrum.—*Punch.*

A CURIOUS ERROR.—In a late list of marriage banns published on the same day in a Paris paper we read: "M. Lammons, cabinet-maker, Rue de Reuilly, 17, to Miss Dourlet, etc.;" and a little lower down: "M. Lammons, cabinet-maker, Rue de Reuilly, 17, to Miss Lescorbal, Rue de Baudouin, 24." But for a compositor's mistake, M. Lammons must be possessed of the most extraordinary, and ubiquitous nuptial powers, which ought to secure him an acquittal or at least an open verdict, in case of trouble.

BOBBY BLACK-SHEEP.—Some persons complain that the organization of the police force has become too military. In one particular it is not military enough. Of late, unworthy members of that generally well-conducted body of men have been disgracing their corps by brutal assaults, by taking people into custody for speaking to them, by locking up sufferers in fits of apoplexy for drunkards, and by false swearing in courts of justice. Military discipline is not, at present, as it ought to be made, applicable to exceptional policemen. He it enacted that all such offenders shall be liable to be flogged and drummed out of their division.—*Punch.*

A SINGULAR MEMENTO.—When the parish minister of Camcock died it was found in his will that he had expressed a desire that any of the parishioners who wished might ask and receive from his wife some small token of remembrance of their deceased pastor. One day shortly after the funeral an old farmer in the district called, when the widow reminding him of the desire of her husband, asked John what he would like to have. "Weel, ma'am," replied John, stroking his chin and scratching his head, "I hardly ken what sort o' a memento mair, as ye ca' it, ta' hae, but if ye hae nae objection I wud tak' that lump of guano ye hae i' the back yard."

TRAINING THE YOUNG.—A magistrate at a public meeting, said that he had been examining the children in a denominational school, and had been struck with their ignorance and stupidity. At last he asked one boy who had been some years at school if he could write. Answer, "No." "Can you read?" Answer, "No." "Can you cipher?" Answer, "No." "Then what on earth can you do?" Answer, "I can do catechism." "Well," said the gentleman, "let us see if you know that—what did your godfathers and godmothers do for you?" Answer, "They did promise and own that I should nurse the devil and all his works, and renounce the pimps of this wicked world."

OUR SHORTHAND NOTES.—Chambord has relapsed into his natural stupid obtuseness. Did not wait to put on the lion-skin before he brayed.—Bismarck again becomes Prime Minister of Prussia. What war next?—Vienna Exhibition and our International closed. So expired two brilliant failures.—Mr. Hawkins obtains a fortnight's adjournment of the Tichborne Trial. Comment is dangerous, so we won't make it.—The moving home in Galway still progresses. It will establish home rule, somewhere eventually.—General Bellemarre wrote to the Minister of War to say he would resign if the Monarchy were restored. Minister at once put him on the retired list. And after all the Monarchy won't be restored. Poor Bellemarre!—Emperor of Austria, "inaugurated" the new Vienna Waterworks. We should have thought the Exhibition had supplied plenty of cold water.—Ex-grand Vizier has returned to Teheran. Nasr-ed-Deen has not yet declared whether he will take off his head, or restore him to the head of affairs.—*Punch.*

TIT FOR TAT.—An Edinburgh paper records an amusing conversation which took place in the galleries of the Free Church Assembly, lately: Young lady—"There's old Dr. A.—going to speak. Isn't he a bore?" Old lady (laughing)—"Well, I suppose he is; but do you know I rather like him?" Young lady—"I can't bear him." Old lady (after some time)—"Who is that nice old gentleman speaking?" Young lady—"Ah! that's Mr. B.—of C.—." Old lady (hesitatingly)—"Don't you think he is—rather prosy?" Young lady (indignantly)—"No

indeed, I do not. Allow me to inform you that that is my father." Old lady—"Oh! indeed. Then I am glad I hit the mark so gently, because 'Old Dr. A.' is my husband. So I suppose we have both got a lesson, my dear, don't you think?"

A MISTAKE.

An absurd mistake led on one occasion to the temporary confinement of a late Lord Chancellor in Ireland in a madhouse. His lordship had received an unfavourable report of this particular asylum, and being anxious to judge for himself he drove up without having sent any intimation of his coming. When the porter refused him admittance he said at last, "I am the Lord Chancellor."

"Oh, Lord Chancellor, eh?" said the porter, grinning as he opened the gate. "Step in; it's all right. We have seven of you here already. One got loose last week with the Emperor of China, but I thought both of you were back."

By this time his lordship was within the gate, and a batch of warders, summoned by the porter, took him in charge. It was not till he had sent for his secretary that he obtained his release.

A GOOD PRECEDENT.—A New York cabman recently received a wholesome lesson. An English gentleman arrived at Jersey city, and drove with his baggage to a fashionable hotel. "What have I to pay?" he inquired of the John. "Just thirteen dollars," promptly replied that politician. Now, a custom prevails in London, pursuant to an Act of Parliament, that in case of any dispute with a fare the cabman must drive to the nearest police court. The Englishman, reasoning by analogy, and luckily in this case, told the man to drive to a police office. Arriving there, the gentleman stated his case, explaining that he was a stranger, and simply wished to pay what was right, according to the recognized tariff. The justice said to this moderate-minded cabman, "You will drive this gentleman to his hotel. Your fare will be altogether three dollars, but before you go you will have to pay one dollar and fifty cents for the expenses attending this most proper application." Let others follow this stranger's lead.

STATISTICS.

INDIAN RAILWAYS.—The extent of railroad open in India at Midsummer, 1873, was 5,511 miles. The gross revenue of the year 1872 was 6,351,617*l.*; the passenger traffic producing over two millions, and the goods' traffic nearly four millions. The expenditure amounted to 3,482,394*l.*, leaving a net revenue of 2,869,223*l.* The guaranteed interest advanced by the government in the year amounted to 4,600,883*l.*, leaving 1,731,660*l.* in excess of the receipts from the traffic. The expenditure on guaranteed railways to March, 1873, has been 91,686,025*l.*, and on State lines to the end of 1872, 3,492,322*l.*, making the expenditure of capital 95,178,347*l.*, exclusive of the land for guaranteed lines. Since the commencement of railway operations in India materials of the value of nearly 30 millions sterling have been sent from the United Kingdom. The number of persons employed on the railways open in October, 1872, was 56,804; above 50,000 were natives of India. At the end of 1872 there were 61,940 proprietors of Indian railway stock and debentures; 888 were natives. In the year 1872 there were 9 passengers killed and 58 injured; but there were only 1 killed and 37 injured from causes beyond their own control, the other 8 killed and 21 injured owing their misfortune to their own misconduct or want of caution. But there were also 78 trespassers killed, 2 persons at level crossings, 108 servants of the company or of contractors, and 14 "miscellaneous," making in all 211 persons killed. The number of passengers in 1872 was 20,325,596, exclusive of 12,859 periodical ticket holders. The third and fourth class passengers constituted nearly 94 per cent. of the whole numbers, and contributed 77 per cent. of the receipts from passenger traffic.

At various points on the river Thames, between Woolwich and Erith, there are visible at low water the remains of a submerged forest, over which the river now flows. This fact has led geologists to conclude that the present outlet of the Thames to the North Sea is of quite recent origin.

SPIDERS.—The spider climbs to an eminence (the most convenient for its purpose) and there affixes its thread; spreading its legs—in order to catch any breeze stirring—it commits itself to the wind, and is carried for some time—in a high wind even miles from the place of its flight. By drawing its limbs close to its body—thus leaving no hold for the wind—it can fall where it pleases. The fine threads act much after the manner of the string attached to a kite, and are broken away or detached, when the insect is sufficiently high in the air, and intends a lengthy aerial voyage.

FORESTS IN GERMANY.—Few people have any

idea of the extent of forest land in Germany, and most imagine that of the Black Forest little is left except a tradition and a conventional blister of woodland, so named. On the contrary, in Hanover alone there are 900,000 acres of wood under State management, while nearly a fourth part of the area of Prussia is in forest, although half of that is in private hands. As is well known, the forest administration in particular districts has long been famous, especially in Thuringia and the Harz mountains. In North Germany generally the responsibilities are allotted in districts among a carefully organized body of officers, presided over by a forest director. The appointments are fairly remunerated, and they are so eagerly sought after that candidates will remain on probation for years at their own cost, or with moderate and precarious pay, in the hope of securing a place in the corps at last.

THE GOLDEN AGE.

In ancient days of poets old

We read of Saturn's age of gold,

And then of Time's dark cycles pass

And man more gross and vicious grew.

The age of silver, iron, brass,

Successive rise upon our view.

Now—thanks to potent art—we find

The iron and the gold combined.

Of iron now our ships we form,

To stem the tide and brave the storm;

Our roads, o'er which with rapid march

Man and earth's rich productions go—

The bridge, who's long, inverted arch

Spans the river's ceaseless flow—

And o'er man's dwellings lift their head,

Drawn from the iron's darkling bed.

And all this ore which bids the sage

Call this, in truth, an iron age—

The potent alchemy of steam

Transmutes, by motion, into gold,

While, like the changes of a dream

Man to earth's farthest bounds is rolled;

And wealth, by intercourse and peace,

Finds all its many streams increase.

Thus War's red weapons, rust decayed,

The useless spear and broken blade,

May, from the blazing furnace heat,

Come forth a means to bless mankind;

Not the hook and ploughshare beat,

But mighty links our race to bind—

Turning, by peace and love untold,

The iron age indeed to gold.

J. H. C.

GEMS.

It often happens that they are the best people whose characters have been most injured by slander, as we often find that to be the sweetest fruit which the birds have been pecking at.

NEVER attempt to do anything that is not right. Just as sure as you do you will get into trouble. If you even suspect that anything is wrong, do it not until you are sure your suspicions are groundless.

It takes two to make a quarrel—just remember that. It takes two to get a quarrel fairly going; so hold your tongue the moment a storm is brewing, and you are without the pale of discord.

A CHEERFUL temper, joined with innocence, will make beauty attractive, knowledge delightful, and wit good-natured. It will lighten illness, poverty and affliction; convert ignorance into an amiable simplicity, and render deformity itself agreeable.

If any man thinks it a small matter, or of mean concernment, to bridle his tongue, he is much mistaken; for it is a point to be silent, when occasion requires, and better than to speak, though never so well.

It always grieves us to contemplate the initiation of children into the ways of life when they are scarcely more than infants. It checks their confidence and simplicity, two of the best qualities that Heaven gives them, and demands that they share our sorrows before they are capable of entering into our enjoyments.

GIANTIC TREE.—There is to be seen in Galloway House Park, in that grand avenue which leads from the gardens to the Bay of Bigg, a tree of the class *Picea pectinata*, or common silver fir, the trunk of which measures in circumference 14 feet, the circumference of the ground under the branches measures 225 feet, and the diameter of the same 75 feet, and the probable height nearly 100 feet. We are doubtful whether nobilis, grandis, and other new and expensive varieties will ever approach this species, or at least this particular plant when they reach the age of it. It is in capital health, and feathered to

the bottom, and still growing on. At a short distance from this, and immediately behind the beautiful flower garden at the House, there stands a magnificent and enormous rhododendron ponticum 24 feet in height, 252 feet in circumference, and 84 feet in diameter. Its colour is a peculiar shade of bright purplish mauve, and its size would have been much larger had it not been confined by a laurel hedge and overshadowed by trees. The rhododendron ponticum and the common laurel grow in great abundance in these grounds, and are greatly admired by all who see them. The sweet hay *Larus nobilis* is to be found growing here as a standard, and stood the winters of 1870 and 1871 uninjured.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

CURE FOR WARTS.—For twenty nights in succession dip the hands in water before going to bed; then, whilst wet, thoroughly rub them with green hops, putting on a pair of gloves to retain the farina. At the end of that time the warts will crumble when washing them, without pain or scar.

THE AGE OF EGGS.—A French savant gives the following as a good test for the age of eggs:—Dissolve 120 grammes of common salt in a litre of water. If the egg is one day old it will sink to the bottom, if it was laid the day before it will not reach the bottom, if three days old it will float, and if more than five it comes to the surface, and the shell will project more and more according to the staleness.

THE TREATMENT OF RHEUMATIC IRRITIS.—Dr. Eano recommends the following treatment, at once directed against the local affection and the rheumatic diathesis:—Solution of atropine, used in the shape of an eye-wash, and the nightly administration of ten grains of Dover's powder. The patient to be warmly clad in flannel, and to abstain from the use of neat wine, strong coffee, and spirits. The solution of atropine is made to the following strength: Distilled water, five ounces; sulphate of atropine, one grain; to be used in an eye-basin every three hours, during six minutes. The eye to be shaded during the day.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Prince of Wales has expressed a desire to hear Sir Samuel Baker when the latter first appears before the Fellows of the Geographical Society.

LORD SKIDDELL goes to Russia for the marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh, and the marriage ceremony will be performed by the Dean of Windsor.

SIR JOHN COLERIDGE has accepted a seat upon the Bench, and it is said that his title is to be Baron Ottery.

SINCE the death of Sir Edwin Landseer several of his most celebrated pictures, including "Dignity and Impudence" and "Diogenes and Alexander," have been placed in the National Gallery.

THE Turkish Government has just borrowed, 4,000,000*l.* at 22 per cent. A real rate of interest, which would stifle the old-fashioned world with its notions of usury figures.

A SUCCESSFUL ANGLER ON THE SPEY.—Mr. John Cruickshank, keeper for William Grant, Esq., of Elchies at Carron, has, during the season just closed, landed to his own rod over 400 fish of the salmon tribe, and weighing in the aggregate over a ton. This feat, single-handed, we believe to be unprecedented in the annals of rod-fishing in the Spey.

NIGHT SIGNALS AT SEA.—In accordance with one of the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, a licence has been granted to the Cunani Company, of Liverpool, for private night signals, in the form of a blue light and two rockets in quick succession, to be used by their steamers when off Holyhead, Queens-town, Crookhaven, or the mouth of the Mersey, or at sea.

PRINCESS MARIE'S TROUSSEAU.—A good deal of the trousseau for the Duke of Edinburgh's bride has been ordered in London. Ireland, too, is contributing her share. Balbriggan stockings, Irish linen, poplins, and lace have already been ordered. One of the poplins is white, with brocade, in which gold thread is interwoven, something like the pattern which was made for the Marchioness of Lorne at the time of her marriage.

MR. COXWELL found by a recent balloon ascent at the height of 10,000 feet above the earth a current running, not from west to east, but from north to south. Mr. Coxwell and his friends started from Hornsey, and finally descended at Box Hill, in Surrey. If the Yankee balloonist had gone due south instead of west as he said he would, his experiences might have been more fruitful in result. Say that he had dropped in the centre of South America, in the trackless and unexplored forests—what then? Wise would have been Wiser.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MALLOCK.—The question is too delicate. Consult any chemist.

A. B. C.—Yes, but it would involve a protracted legal suit. The course is to consult a solicitor.

A FAIR ONE.—Any chemist would supply you with a deplumatory. These, however, are dangerous.

J. L. (Rochdale).—1. A boy. 2. The late baronet, we presume. 3. The spire of St. Paul's Cathedral.

E. M. H.—Our serial tales are usually arranged for; otherwise in quite the ordinary mode of publication. Many thanks, however, for yours.

A SUBSCRIBER.—Pierces them with a finely pointed needle, and take some good tonic—such as steel and quinine.

ANXIOUS ONE.—1. He has no power whatever to compel you. It will therefore be perfectly safe to give a distinct refusal. 2. Aet often found on lockets and other delicious little tokens mean precisely for ever. It refers to the presumed duration of the attachment. "At lovers' perjuries they say Jove laughs" (Shakespeare).

R. S.—The sentiment of your lines is creditable, but the execution is indifferent and the phraseology especially prosaic. We have no desire to discourage your efforts; quite otherwise, in fact. But thus far you have not attained the requisite standard. We therefore must decline your contribution with our thanks.

RAMDOLPH.—The use of mineral medicines is at least exceedingly doubtful. God has kindly given the herbs of the field and air and exercise to relieve our manifold ailments. What requires arduous consideration is in these matters doubtful. The simplest remedies consequently are proved to be the best.

L. L. G.—We cannot understand your question; not at least in its present aspect. Your own personal friends will be your best and sincerest and most completely competent advisers, since they, and they alone, know with necessary accuracy the actual state of affairs. Meanwhile, do not fret. That is always a mistake.

L. E.—We cannot engage in the memorable Tichborne controversy. While the affair is still pending we are bound by the recognized etiquette of journalism to impartially suspend our judgment. This rule, we regret to say, has been infringed more than once. But Jesuitical casuistry is singular, as the Maynooth books attest.

POET.—By alliteration is meant a certain assonance, or exact congruity of words. Words beginning chiefly with the same letter. The earlier English poets prodigally employed this practice. So Gray—"nor cast one lingering look behind," or a fine passage in his "Progress of Poesy."

P. A.—For very manifest reasons we and all journalists are by the strictest etiquette compelled to decline giving any personal addresses. You happen to require the address of the Marchioness of Queensbury. Consult, therefore, any directory of London, or any Peerage. You will then find all the residence. Use the Scottish address by preference as the London season is now over.

MIRANDA.—The hair is a beautiful golden, and the impersonated beauty seems, if we may judge by the vivid and eloquent description, to be most fascinating. And you tell us that you have had a melancholy quarrel with your lover! Well, a beautiful girl can always bend the haughtiest Saxon gentleman to her dictatorial will. This is feminine tact.

ALICE.—1. Your questions are indeed varied in character. We are wholly unable to reply to the first one, beyond this—any dealer in the wise commodity called sticks. 2. The meaning of personal names is folly—designed only for the credulous and the unreflecting. However, Frank means (or is said to mean, the same thing) generous; and Beatrice may perhaps be connected with the Latin *Beatus*, meaning happy in the higher sense.

WINTER.—When the hands or the feet are frost-bitten or benumbed from the effects of cold the parts should be rubbed with camphorated spirit, applied with the utmost gentleness, so as not to irritate the surface by violent friction. When the first effects of cold are removed, it will be proper to apply cold poultices, for warm applications are to be carefully avoided. When people are frost-bitten in Russia the common practice is to restore the circulation by rubbing them with snow.

CHARLOTTE E. M.—1. The profession of governess is not adequately remunerated. It is sad to find fairly educated and ladylike women placed in a position of painful, cringing dependence. Under the circumstances the salary you name is, however, not a bad one. 2. By a suitable marriage you would, we presume, be in any case more comfortable. As for the rival admirers your

own heart, duly influenced by your reason, will be the best monitor. 3. If you seek a governess's engagement in England you might try the advertising columns of the newspapers.

JOHN B.—All theatres duly licensed enjoy the same power with one modification as concerning the production of pieces. In London, for example, there are more than twenty theatres; yet all enjoy a like licence. The phrase Theatre Royal seems to date from the time of Charles the Second, when the players of Drury called themselves "His Majesty's Servants." Our remark, we ought to add, applies to all theatres within the kingdom—whether in London, Glasgow, or elsewhere; save only that outside a certain London radius the Chamberlain's intervention as to censorship does not reach. "Provincial" shows are therefore freer than London ones.

SOFTY.—To scour feathers cut up into small pieces four ounces of white soap, dissolve in four pounds of moderately hot water in a large basin. Beat this into a lather. Two bundles of the feathers, tied with pack-thread, are then introduced and rubbed well with the hands for five or six minutes; then wash them well in water as hot as the hand can bear. To bleach them they are immersed in hot water mixed with Spanish white, after which they are washed in three waters in succession. To render the ribs more pliant scrape them with the edge of a piece of glass. To make the filament curl pass them in the required direction over the edge of a blunt knife.

K. S. (Wolverhampton).—The study of the Early English, particularly in its Chaucerian development, is getting into general favour. As for books we may thoroughly recommend: (1.) The publications of the Early English Text Society and the productions generally of Furnival and Morris. An able worker in the same philological field is Mr. J. W. Hales, whose *Spenser* is almost unique for thorough and considerate editing, uniformly of a scholarly sort. (2.) There is the selection from Chaucer in the Clarendon Press Series; the price being about half-a-crown. Read also such a manual as the late Prof. Craik's treatise on the English Language, or that issued by Dr. Angus. For all things, however, we greatly prefer Craik. His book, small, unpretentious but valuable, is the best compendium of its kind extant in the language. (3.) De Quincy's works are the elaborate models of finished cultured English, and of all composition they, for the native language, are the noblest, the most versatile, the most eloquent, and indisputably the best.

A LOVER'S COMPARISON.

Fond lovers' hearts for ever scout

The notion of deceiving;

The married ones begin to doubt

The prudence of believing.

The lover's days are quickly past,

'Mid sighs and fond embraces

The husband's years how long they last

While from his vows retreating.

The lover's oath the impress wears

Of soft and kind affection;

The oath the husband often swears

Is of more rude complexion.

Attentions which a lover pays

Are always new and pleasing;

While those the married man displays

Are mostly stale and teasing.

Change as they will, the maid, the wife—

It's always stood to reason,

That everything within this life

Has a spring and winter season.

And all who journey through this life

As husband, wife, or lover,

To void the troubles, cares and strife,

Must each one help the other.

And here I pause, lest I should find

That all young maids might falter

Who had but half made up their mind

To kneel at Hymen's altar.

E. R.

M. B., twenty-two, dark, pretty, and domesticated, wishes to correspond with a dark young man, who is affectionate, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

Augustus M., twenty, tall, dark, and in a good position, would like to become acquainted with a young lady about seventeen.

WILFRED, twenty-six, 5ft. 7in., dark complexion, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be tall, fair, and thoroughly domesticated.

FELIX, twenty-three, tall, and of an amiable disposition. Respondent must be about twenty, loving, and domesticated; a cook preferred.

PORRY, eighteen, a brunette, accomplished, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall and dark; an officer preferred.

FRED D., twenty-four, tall, fair, considered handsome, and in a good position, desires to correspond with a pretty young lady about nineteen.

SUSAN N., eighteen, fair complexion, and thoroughly domesticated, desires to correspond with a tall, dark gentleman.

AMT, twenty-two, medium height, dark hair, and hazel eyes. Respondent must be a steady young man about twenty-four.

HERBERT S. H., twenty, considered good looking, fair, blue eyes, and of highly respectable family. Respondent must be about seventeen, loving, pretty, and domesticated.

A. B., nineteen, tall, fair, good looking, lively in disposition, very fond of music, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty to twenty-five, tall, dark, and able to keep a wife comfortably.

FANNY J., twenty-three, affectionate, domesticated, and good tempered, desires to correspond with a steady young man about twenty-five, affectionate, and fond of home.

LUCY, twenty, medium height, fair complexion, gray eyes, brown hair, pretty, and domesticated. Respondent must be loving, and fond of home and children; a mechanic preferred.

VICTOR H., twenty-three, 5ft. 4in., dark, handsome, and a tradesman, wishes to correspond with an accomplished

young lady of good figure, pretty, with dark-blue eyes, fair complexion, and fond of music.

A. G., twenty-one, respectfully connected, steady and affectionate, desires to correspond with a young lady about twenty, good tempered, of a loving disposition, and domesticated.

DICK J., twenty-three, 5ft. 7in., dark complexion, good looking, well educated, and of a loving disposition. Respondent must be dark, pretty, and a good figure; a domestic servant preferred.

BEN O., twenty-four, tall, dark, affectionate, and fond of home, desires to correspond with a young lady about twenty, fair, pretty, well educated, domesticated, and fond of home.

LILIAN, nineteen, medium height, considered pretty, and domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty-two, good looking, loving, good tempered, and in a good position.

CLARA, twenty-two, dark, medium height, of a loving disposition, and a domestic servant. Respondent must be about her own age, tall, affectionate, good looking, and fond of home.

ALFRED W., twenty-six, fair, considered good looking, tall, fond of home, and an engineer with a salary of 120l. per annum. Respondent must be about twenty-one, dark, medium height, and fond of home and children.

F. C. B., eighteen, medium height, fair complexion, dark eyes and hair, loving, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, fair, affectionate, fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

ALICE E., twenty-two, medium height, fair complexion, blue eyes, affectionate disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, about twenty-four, loving, and fond of home.

SOLUS, twenty-six, 5ft. 9in., dark-brown hair, gray eyes, of good occupation, and has already a home of his own. Respondent may be either dark or fair, not under middle height, thoroughly domesticated, and of a loving disposition.

RONALD, twenty-two, tall, fair, brown hair, gentlemanly, good looking, fond of music, desires to correspond with a pretty young lady about twenty, who must be dark, of medium height, loving, and of musical tastes.

WILL-O'-THE-WISP, forty-five, a widower without income, and a mechanic in constant employment earning 2l. per week, desires to correspond with a young woman domesticated and affectionate; a cook or a domestic servant preferred.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

X. Y. X. is responded to by—"Carrie S." twenty-seven, fair, considered pretty, and possessing light golden hair.

H. H. by—"Carry" twenty-seven, fair, considered pretty, and has light, golden hair.

M. D. by—"Edward," twenty-two, and he thinks will suit her.

LOUISA by—"Thoughtful Jack," who thinks he is all that she requires.

THUNDERER by—"Genevieve," dark, pretty, loving, and thinks that she will be all that he requires.

CHERRIDGE JACK by—"Lilian," twenty, pretty, loving, and thoroughly domesticated.

FOLLY by—"Georgie," about the same age, tall, dark, and handsome; is a grocer with 100l. per annum.

MISERIE by—"Bob C." twenty-three, tall, dark, and would make her a loving and affectionate husband.

MISERIE S. by—"First Look-out," who thinks he is all she requires.

SARAH by—"Frank W.," tall, dark, handsome, about her own age, and thinks he would suit her.

LEADING HAND by—"Water Lily," twenty, considered pretty, domesticated, loving, and fond of music.

W. H. by—"Lily," twenty-four, medium height, of a loving disposition, fair, blue eyes, and a quantity of golden hair.

ANULOUS BY—"Daisy," who is pretty, loving, fond of home and children, and thinks she is all that he requires.

FOLLY L. by—"S. B.," twenty-three, tall, dark, affectionate, and in search of an affectionate, domesticated wife.

TED B. by—"Emily T.," twenty-two, tall, brown hair, gray eyes, is considered good looking, is very loving and agreeable.

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